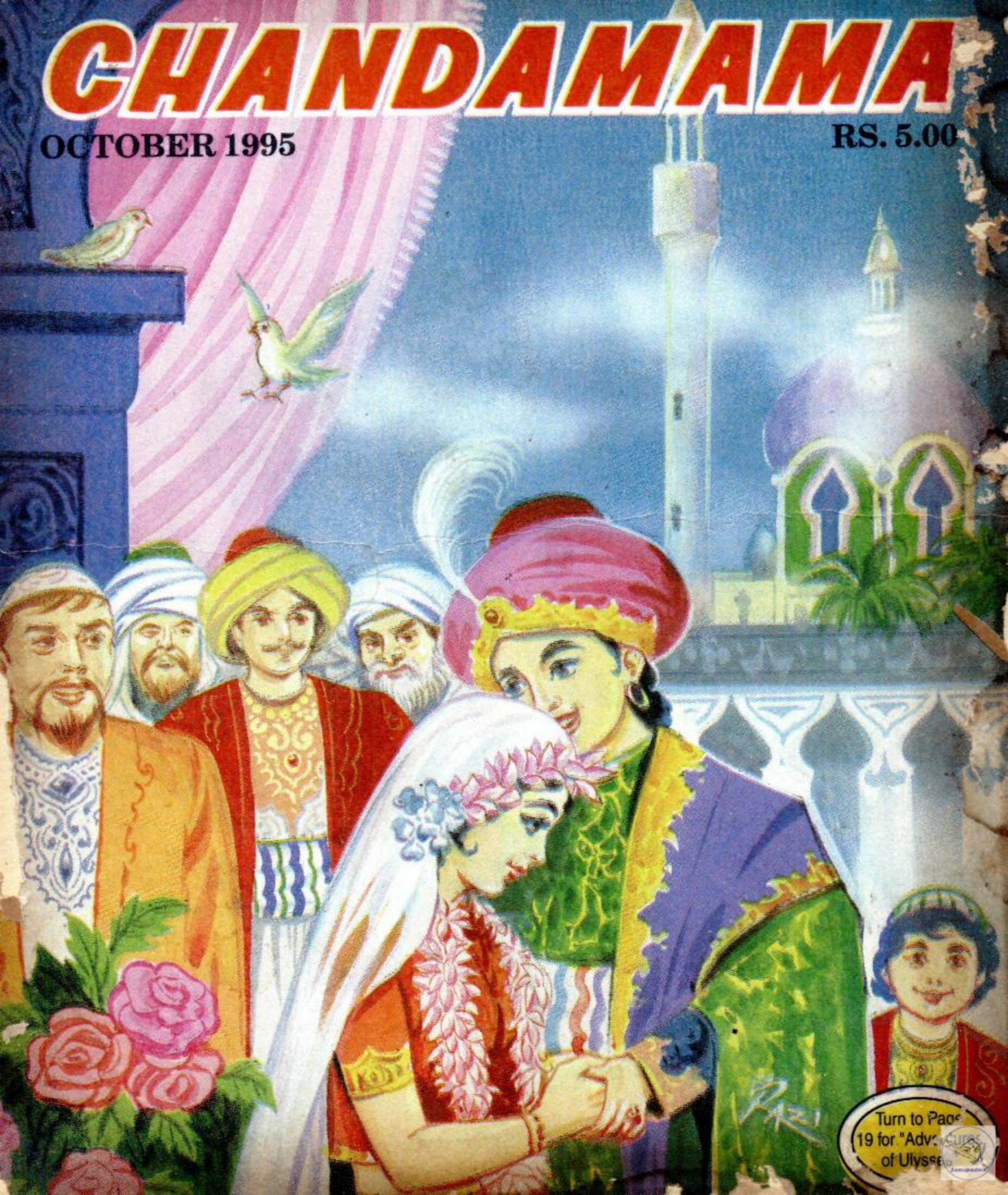


CHANDAMAMA

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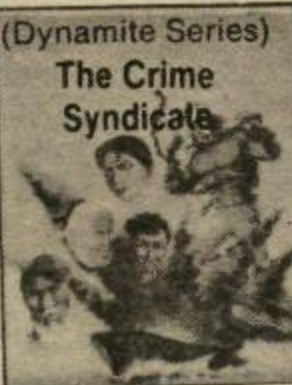
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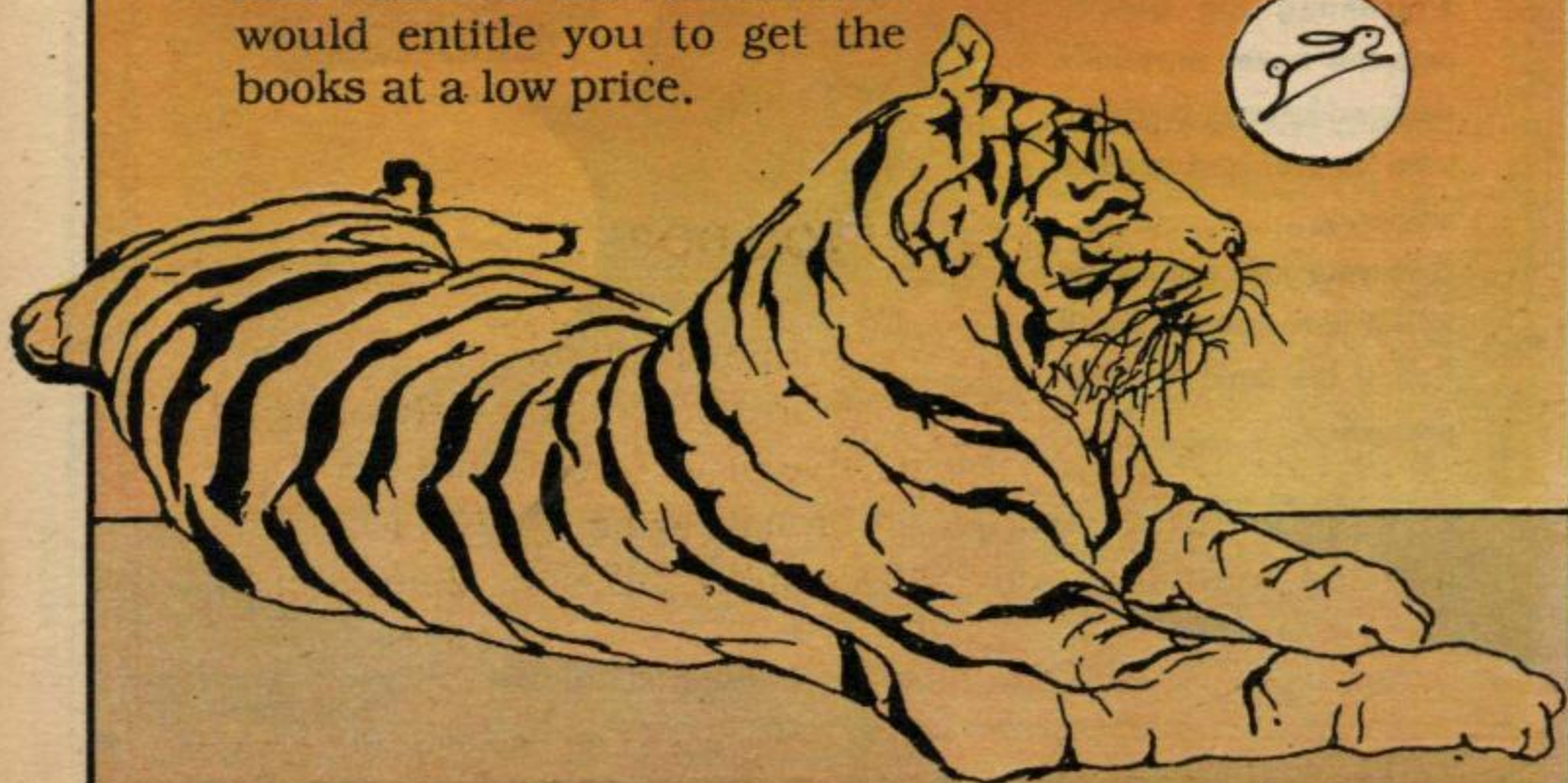


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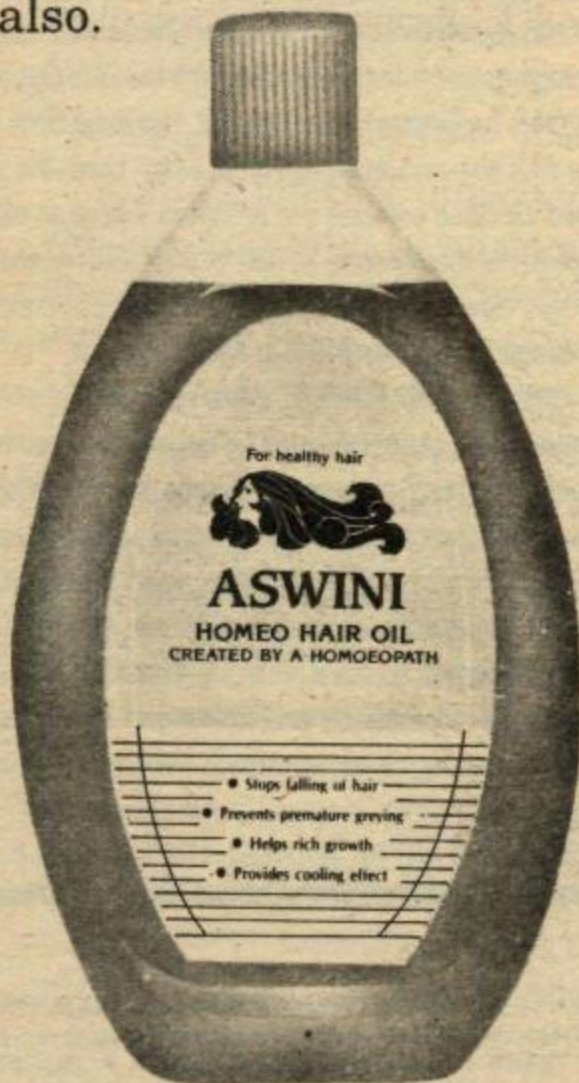
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And News Flash, Let Us Know and more.

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SEVEN VOYAGES OF SINDBAD : After the passing away of his mother, Sindbad, who has not stirred out in order to look after her, goes on another voyage. The ship drops anchor so that it can replenish its stock of water. Those who roam the island come upon a huge white egg and break it. Out comes a baby roc. As Sindbad has expected, two huge birds hover above their ship and drop giant rocks which break the vessel into two. Sindbad escapes into an island, where an old man gets on to his shoulders as he cannot walk. But he refuses to get down! How Sindbad manages to free himself makes the fifth voyage as exciting as the previous voyages.

THE GIRL IN THE FOREST : Mangalsen, the prince of Madhurapuri, is more interested in hunting than learning the rudiments of ruling a kingdom, despite his education in a *gurukul*. King Simhasen is naturally disappointed in his son. His disappointment gives way to illness and he passes away suddenly. Mangalsen ascends the throne. One day, while hunting, he comes across a hut in the thick forest. He enters the hut to be accosted by a beautiful girl staying there all alone. He asks her to go with him to the palace. Does she accept the king's offer of a royal status for her?

Also **PANCHATANTRA, MAHABHARATA** and the pull-out.

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Founder
CHAKRAPANI



Controlling Editor :
NAGI REDDI

To be tolerant to one and all

The Chinese have a way of giving a name to every new year, like the 'Year of the Dog'. In our country, each year according to the Tamil calendar gets a name. This year it is called Yuva Varsha or the year of the youth. That brings us to our mind the Year of the Child. That description was given to 1979 by the United Nations which, too, baptises each year. Last year, it was the Year of the Family; 1995 is the Year of Tolerance.

In 1979, the U.N. urged every member-country to plan programmes for the welfare of children. In subsequent years, they formulated the Rights of the Child and held a World Conference of Children. By calling 1994 the Year of the Family, the United Nations stressed the importance of family ties which are safeguarded by affection, regard, and respect for each other among the several members of the family. *Bhagavad Gita* says: "Every person should be equally disposed towards friends and foes, towards the indifferent and the hateful, towards the righteous and unrighteous." This is TOLERANCE. The *Gita* calls such persons, who are tolerant of others, as "leaders whose perfect actions are worth emulating".

When differences of opinion occur, one is often advised to step into the other person's shoes and evaluate the problem from the other person's point of view. One need not even then agree to those views because of personal reasons, but tolerance will help him accept the right of the other to hold a different view.

Mahatma Gandhi would characterise religion as a way to attain 'Self-knowledge' or "Self-realisation". He once said: "I look at all religions with equanimity, because they speak the same truth." Among all acts of human behaviour, religious tolerance assumes the greatest importance.

Isn't it a happy coincidence then that the U.N. chose Tolerance as its cardinal theme for 1995 when the world celebrates Gandhiji's 125th birth anniversary?



A WINDOW ON THE WORLD

Changing trends in Thailand

Thailand has a new Prime Minister from July 14. Following his party's success in the July 2 Parliamentary elections, Mr. Banharn Silpa-Archa, leader of the Chart Thai Party, succeeded Mr. Chuan Leekpai, of the Democratic Party, who held office for 33 months — the longest ever for an elected civilian Prime Minister.

Mark the word 'civilian'. Thailand (formerly Siam) had Military administrators also in between ever since a coup d'etat in 1932 replaced absolute monarchy with constitutional monarchy. The king is the head of the state, while the Prime Minister is the head of the government. Incidentally, Siam is the only country in southeast Asia that never became a colony of another country—like India, which remained a British colony for more than two centuries.

In 1939, the country's name was changed to Thailand. King Bhumibol Adulyadej ascended the throne in 1946 and has been ruling for the past 50 years. When the king signed the royal command appointing Mr. Banharn Silpa-Archa, he became the country's 21st Prime Minister.

In the elections, his Chart Thai Party did not get an absolute majority; but it won the largest number of seats—92, six more than the 86 seats secured by the

ruling Democratic Party. Both parties realised that it would have to be a coalition government. Five opposition parties announced their support to Chart Thai. They are the New Aspiration Party with 57 seats, Palang Dharma (23), Social Action Party (22), Thai Citizens (18), and Mass Party (3 seats). When it was certain that Mr. Banharn Silpa-Archa had secured adequate support to form a government, the Nam Thai with 18 seats also came forward to join the coalition. The combined strength of all these seven parties is 233 seats in the 391-member parliament.

It has been agreed that the first five parties to extend support to Chart Thai will share the five posts of Deputy Prime Ministers. Nam Thai has been offered some key ministries like Defence, Transport, Agriculture, and Foreign Relations.

A war against poverty is a poll promise that the coalition will strive to implement, besides streamlining land reforms.



A free puff

Bhairav was a moneylender. People called him a miser. But he took it as a compliment. "Anyone without money or wealth cannot be a miser," was his contention. "Whoever has money has also to be a miser. Only then will he have any money to spare for others! To give as loans and earn interest." He firmly believed in this axiom.

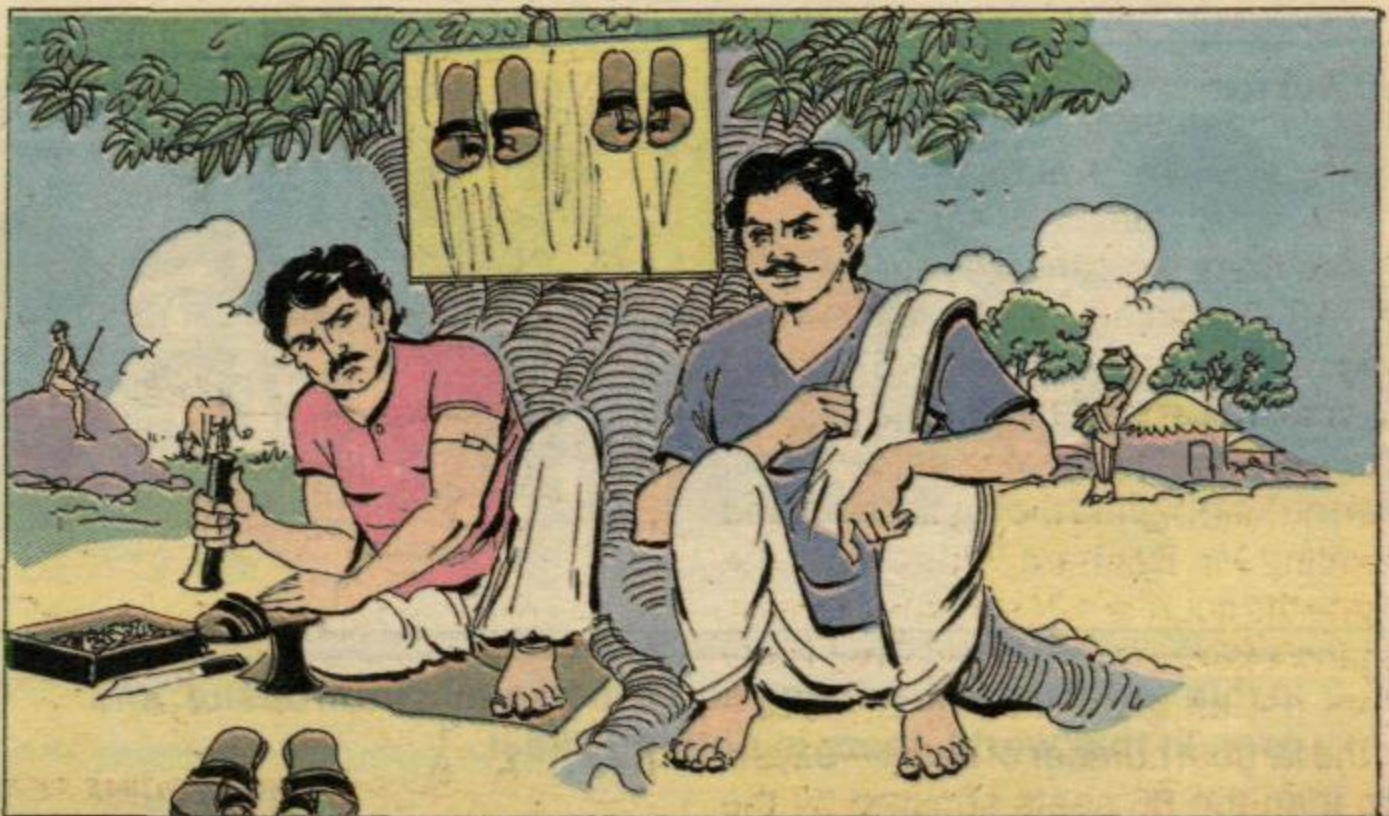
One evening, on his way back from his farm, Bhairav stepped into the cobbler's hut. Chellayya was happy on seeing the rich moneylender come to him. He would surely buy a pair of sandals.

"Sir, I shall give you a pair for fifteen rupees — a pair for which you will have to pay thirty rupees in the bazaar! A fine pair!"

"Who needs footwear?" remarked Bhairav. "The foot sole may wear out. It doesn't matter. In one day, it'll become rough again. No, I didn't come here to buy footwear."

Chellayya was downcast. He thought he had lost a customer.

"On my way, someone gave me a *beedi*," said Bhairav. "I knew you smoke *beedi*. So I came here to borrow your match-box. Let me take a puff!"





In this world there is nothing equal to freedom from desire; and even in that world, there is nothing like it.

- Thirukkural



THE FOOLISH WEAVER HURRIES TO THE GODDESS AND DECLARES HIS WISH.



ALL RIGHT. I GRANT YOUR WISH.

HOW LUCKY INDEED! WITH FOUR HANDS AND TWO HEADS, I'LL SOON BECOME RICH.



LOOK THERE! LOOK!

WHAT'S IT?



WHEN THE VILLAGE FOLK SEE THE WEAVER, THEY TAKE HIM TO BE A MONSTER AND BEAT HIM TO DEATH.

KILL! KILL!



KILL THAT CREATURE!

PLEASE STOP!

IT'S ME, THE WEAVER!

THE WHEEL-BEARER CONCLUDES THE STORY THUS.



THAT'S HOW THE WEAVER WAS KILLED. SO, ONE SHOULD ACCEPT ONLY GOOD ADVICE AND FOLLOW IT.

THE WEAVER SHOULD HAVE LISTENED TO HIS FRIEND'S ADVICE.



I'M HAPPY YOU NOW AGREE WITH ME.



ALL MY MISERY IS THE RESULT OF MY GREED. THAT REMINDS ME OF A STORY.



LET ME HEAR IT!

The possession of energy of mind is true wealth. Any other wealth will pass away.

ONCE THERE LIVED A BEGGAR WHO USED TO GO FROM DOOR TO DOOR ASKING FOR FOOD.



ONE DAY, AS HE IS BEGGING...

I'M LUCKY TODAY. EVEN AFTER LUNCH, I'M LEFT WITH PLENTY OF FOOD.



THE POOR FELLOW IS SO OVERJOYED THAT HE IS SOON GIVEN TO DAY-DREAMING.

A FAMINE WILL STRIKE THE LAND. PEOPLE WILL DIE OF HUNGER...



A RICH MAN WILL COME TO ME FOR FOOD.



PLEASE GIVE ME THAT FOOD. I'LL GIVE YOU HUNDRED GOLD PIECES. PLEASE!



ALL RIGHT, TAKE IT.



WITH THAT MONEY, I'LL BUY A COW AND SELL ITS MILK.



AND THEN I'LL BUY MORE COWS. I'LL HAVE...



...PLENTY OF WEALTH AND HERDS OF CATTLE...



THE BEGGAR DREAMT ON...



When a man puts away idleness, the reproach which has come upon himself and his family will disappear.



THEN I'LL BUY HORSES
AND ALSO AN ELEPHANT.
A RICH MAN WILL THEN
COME TO ME AND SAY...

SIR! WILL YOU PLEASE
MARRY MY DAUGHTER?
I'LL GIVE YOU ONE HALF
OF MY WEALTH AS DOWRY.

AFTER MARRIAGE, I'LL
HAVE A HANDSOME
SON..

YOUR NAME SHALL BE
CHANDRAHASA.

CHANDRAHASA IS NOW
GROWN UP AND BECOMES
A NAUGHTY KID.



ONE DAY, AS I'M BUSY WITH
MY ACCOUNTS..
FATHER! FATHER!

YOU NAUGHTY KID, GET
OUT! DON'T DISTURB ME!

MY DEAR! COME HERE AND
TAKE THIS CHILD AWAY. I'M
BUSY.

ARROGANT WOMAN! WHY
DON'T YOU IMMEDIATELY
OBEY ME? I WILL KICK YOU.



THE WHEEL - BEARER
CONCLUDES THE STORY
THUS...

THE BEGGAR, IN HIS DREAM,
KICKS HIS POT OF FOOD TO
THE GROUND AND THE DREAM
COMES TO A SAD END.

ONE SHOULD NOT BE
EXCESSIVELY GREEDY
AND DREAM OF THINGS
WHICH CAN NEVER
HAPPEN.

HAVEN'T YOU HEARD THE
STORY OF CHANDRAKETU
THE GREEDY?

NO. WHO'S HE? WHAT'S THE
STORY?



The great will not regard trouble as trouble, knowing that the
body is the butt of trouble.

In the midst is not to be in the middle

Where can we use midst and not middle? asks Jagannath Debashis Das, of Baripada.

Though the dictionary gives the meaning 'middle' to midst or amidst, when you are 'in the midst of friends' you need not be in the middle; you may not then be the centre of attraction! Or when you are in the middle of a game (like chess), you are reluctant to raise your head when your mother calls you. You are in the midst of strategies!

Jatindra Singh, of Jhirpani, wants to know why the word 'Cesio' is pronounced as 'Kesio', when the letter 'c' followed by 'e' (also i, and y) has the sound of 's' (centre, cinema, cycle).

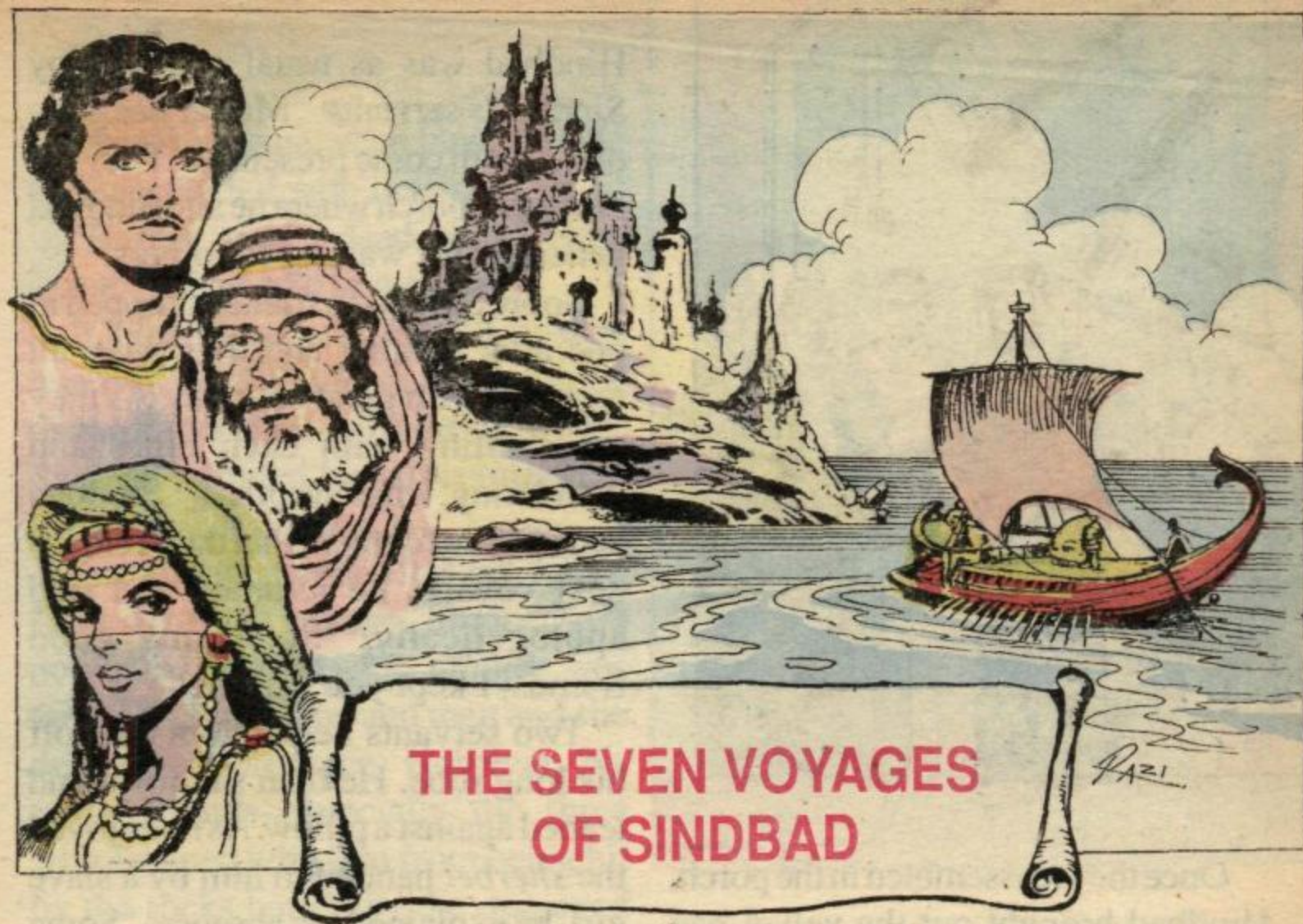
To the best of our knowledge, there is no word spelt as 'cesio'. However, the word 'Casio' (which is a proper noun - a musical instrument) is pronounced with a 'ka' sound, like every word in the English language starting with the three letters 'cas'.

What is the difference between 'affect' and 'effect'? asks G. Sreenivasulu, Karimnagar.

Affect is to influence or to move the feelings of ...a person or decision. Like, a poor percentage of marks in your high school examination will 'affect' your admission to college; or a change in your attitude will affect your relationship with your friend; or the death of the only earning member will affect the future of the family. The 'effect' of his passing away will be, the children will have to stop their education and go for employment; the effect of low marks in the examination will be denial of admission. Effect is the result of an action or circumstances.

Papu, Titu, Rashmi, Runi, and Chinchu of Durgapur are curious to know the meaning of 'to come home by weeping - cross'.

Weeping-cross is a wayside cross where penitents might stop and pray. To come home by weeping - cross means to experience bitter regret, disappointment, or failure.



As he left the portals of Sindbad's mansion that night, Hindbad the porter was curious to know what the velvet bag contained. At the time of bidding farewell to his friends, Sindbad had signalled to Hindbad to stay back for a while and after everyone else left, he had thrust the bag into his hands. He hurried home, deciding that he would open the bag only in the presence of his wife and children.

They were eagerly awaiting him, expecting to hear his footsteps any

moment. Zubeida and her son and daughter almost pounced on him the moment he entered the house. He was all smiles and they knew that he had brought something for them. "Abba, what have you brought today?" The little girl could not control herself as they sat around the huge plate with a modest heap of food and delicacies.

"I haven't seen it myself, Zohra my little darling," Hindbad confessed. "I don't know what the bag contains. I can only say that Sindbad would not disappoint us."





Once they reassembled in the porch, Hindbad brought out the velvet bag and slowly opened it. He pushed his fingers inside and pulled out one gold coin, then another, and then another. There were quite a few of them which, if they were not enough to make them rich, would at least help them lead a comfortable life for some months. "Have you to go again tomorrow, my lord?" queried Zubeida.

"Yes, Zubeidia," said Hindbad. "I think he likes my company. So I shall go. Who knows he may not take me along if he were to go on another voyage!"

The next day, when he arrived,

Hindbad was as usual received by Sindbad's servants. "Master has gone out; he will come presently." They led him to the porch where he and Sindbad generally sat waiting for others.

Soon, Sindbad's friends dropped in one after another and they were all received with great courtesy. As they sat chatting with each other and wondering what surprises Sindbad had in store for them that day from his next voyage, he returned and said apologetically, "Sorry, my good friends, I kept you waiting."

Two servants helped him take off his long robe. He then sat down and leaned against a pillow. As he enjoyed the *sherbet* handed to him by a slave girl, he explained his absence. "Some traders from the East are here and they wanted my help in buying merchandise. They all wish that I undertook a voyage to their lands. How can I? I'm getting old and weak!"

"Don't say that, Sindbad!" remarked one of his friends. "You've a strong will power; and fortune is on your side. You must give a serious thought to their suggestion. Nobody else would have had the kind of adventures you went through..."

Before he could complete the sentence, Sindbad interjected. "Ah! that reminds me. I must tell you about

my fourth voyage when I took a bride and was buried with her!"

"Buried with a dead body? How come?" They said in a chorus.

"Come on, let's eat. You all must be hungry!" said Sindbad, as he turned towards one of the halls inside, where Sindbad narrated his adventures.



For almost a year after his return from the third voyage, Sindbad did not leave town as his mother was taking ill every now and then and she desired his presence. However, his trader-friends—especially the three who escaped with him from being hit by the rocks hurled by the one-eyed giant—used to call on him, to ask him when he would join them again. They felt that they owed their life to Sindbad and his presence of mind. His mother was aware of all this and was sorry that her health was forcing him to stay back home. Once she felt she had regained her health, she suggested to Sindbad that he could now think of undertaking another voyage. "Sindbad, my son, you're now grown up and must go out and enjoy life. You don't worry about me, I'm all right now."

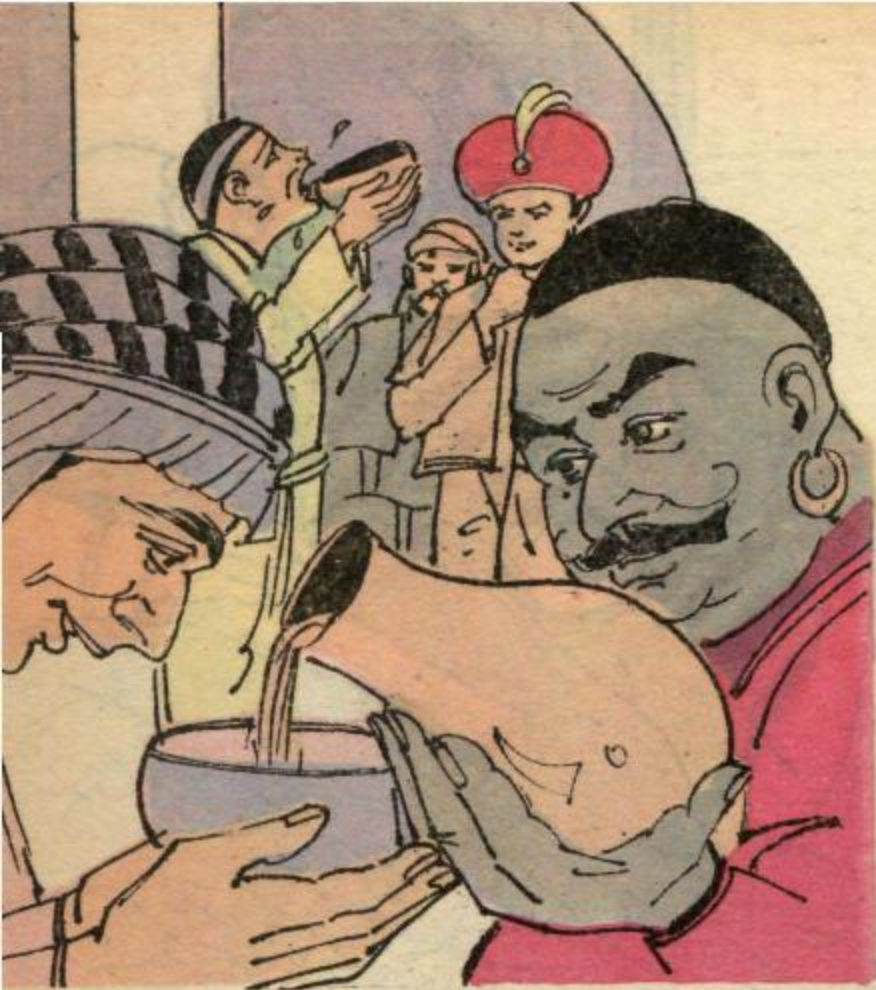
Sindbad gave a thought to what his mother told him, and decided to go on another voyage. He found one ship almost ready to start, but it belonged



to someone other than his father's friend. He met him and struck a deal. He paid whatever advance money he demanded and then went about buying and stocking merchandise on board. They waited for favourable winds to set sail, which took place on the fourth day. Most of the traders on board were strangers to Sindbad but in no time he befriended them.

However, tragedy struck them after three days of sailing when their ship encountered a violent hurricane. The captain, who had some successful sailings behind him, somehow could not save the ship, which was a total wreck. Many on board lost their lives





while swimming in the turbulent waters. Sindbad and three of his companions caught hold of wooden pieces from the wreck and clung on to them till they were washed ashore on an island, where they scrambled to safety from the high-rising waves.

After they had rested for a while, they got up and decided to explore the place. Some distance away from the shore, they came upon some huts. Their footsteps brought the inmates out. They were huge-built, black-skinned people. They were led to one of the huts, where they were asked to sit on the floor. One of the men went inside and brought four bowls and

began pouring some potion from a jug. They then showed signs, asking them to drink it. Sindbad hesitated to drink. But his companions seemed to relish it and as they emptied their cups, more of the liquid was poured.

Sindbad could not believe his eyes when he saw his friends now walking on their fours! And they were mumbling and chattering or making illegible sounds. A while later the men brought them something that looked like rice and curry. Sindbad ate a little of it and showed signs that he was not hungry. Whereas all three of his companions almost grabbed their plates and devoured all that was placed on the plates. Soon they fell asleep snoring aloud. Sindbad could not get any sleep and remained contemplating ways to escape from there. They were surrounded by the savages inside the hut and outside, too, and escape was just out of the question. One day passed, another day, and yet another day. Sindbad knew that he would have to go alone, leaving his companions to their fate.

On the fourth day, the men left the place, leaving an old man on guard duty. Sindbad was not sure whether they would return before nightfall or would be away for a longer time. Anyway, he marked his time and when



he saw the old man doze off, while his three companions snored away their four-legged life, he stealthily came out of the hut and ran and ran without turning back even to take a glance to find out whether he was being followed.

He ran for his life, halting only to rest his legs or take a wink of sleep, mostly in the night. He must have run for four or five days before he reached the shore where, to his surprise, he came upon some fair-skinned men, plucking pepper that grew in abundance. Guessing that the stranger must be from one of the Arab countries, they accosted him in Arabic and he gave them a big smile. He told him who he was, though the name Sindbad did not ring any bell in them. Apparently they had not heard of Sindbad the sailor.

"Did you say black men?" one of them curiously queried repeatedly. "Dark-skinned people? They must be the savages people normally are afraid of. They devour human beings after fattening them! And how did you escape?"

Sindbad then narrated everything that had happened since they set sail. They were astonished to hear the details and praised him for his resourcefulness and courage. They promised to take him along and later help him return to Baghdad.



They seemed to know of a safe passage to the country through which they came to collect pepper. They were quite familiar to the people of that kingdom, for, they showed extreme respect for them and insisted on their calling on the ruler.

They were ushered into the presence of the king, who was overjoyed when they presented him with a small trinket-box. The contents almost made him swoon. "Black diamond!" he exclaimed.

One of the white men whispered into Sindbad's ears: "He's fond of pepper! See how he calls it black diamond!"



The king took off one of his pearl necklaces and handed it to the leader of the group. "Nothing to compare with the black diamond!" said he, modestly. "But tell me, who's this handsome young man?"

"He calls himself Sindbad, your majesty!" the leader introduced him. "He's not only handsome; he's brave, too!" He then gave the king an account of Sindbad's escape from the savages.

The king called him by his side and shook hands with him and patted him. "You must stay in the palace as my honoured guest." The king turned to the others. "And you too must give me your company for some days."

"But your majesty," the leader said hesitatingly, "we've to go a long distance and must start today itself."

"If you say so, I shall grant you permission to leave my kingdom. But don't insist on this young man going with you."

"Not all all, your majesty," assured the leader, "let him stay here, for he needs rest from his adventures. With your kind permission, we shall take leave of you, your majesty." Turning to Sindbad, he said, "Have a joyous time, Sindbad!"

Sindbad stayed in the palace in all comfort. There was a retinue of servants to look after him. Two of them escorted him whenever he went out to see the city. Every evening, he would be taken to the king who would discuss with him, especially matters regarding trade after he was told that Sindbad used to visit countries to sell his merchandise.

One day, as he walked along the streets, the king came that way riding a horse. But the animal did not have stirrups or a bridle! That evening when he met the king, he told him of the use and advantages of those conveniences. The king bade him prepare a set of stirrups and bridle for his horse.

Sindbad set to work on them immediately. When they were ready,

he had the royal horse saddled and helped the king to get on the horse and ride in dignity and comfort. He was mightily pleased with Sindbad.

When they met again in the king's court, the king held him by his shoulders and said, "Could I ask for a favour, Sindbad?"

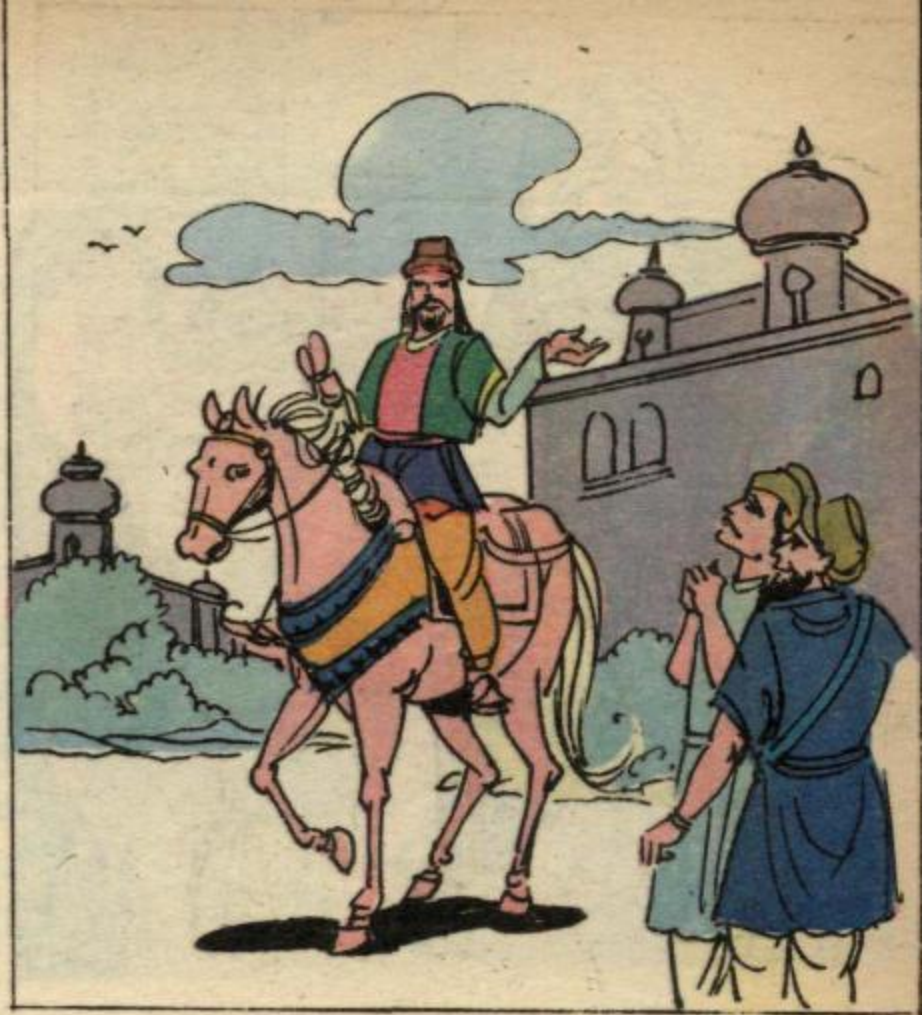
"A favour from me, your majesty?" Sindbad exclaimed with humility. "Kings do not seek favours, they merely command! And what's your command, your majesty?"

"I wish you took my daughter as your bride!" said the king without beating about the bush.

"Marry the princess?" Sindbad could not believe his ears.

"Yes, my young friend!" said the king. You'll make a good husband for my daughter. And in course of time you'll also succeed me and rule this kingdom."

As the king had expressed his wish in the court in the presence of his courtiers and the vizir, Sindbad was at a loss to decide whether he should accept the offer then and there or ask for time. If he were to reject the proposal, he was not sure how the king would treat him later. Would his life be under any threat? Even if he was allowed to go away, the prospect was a return to Baghdad to remain a

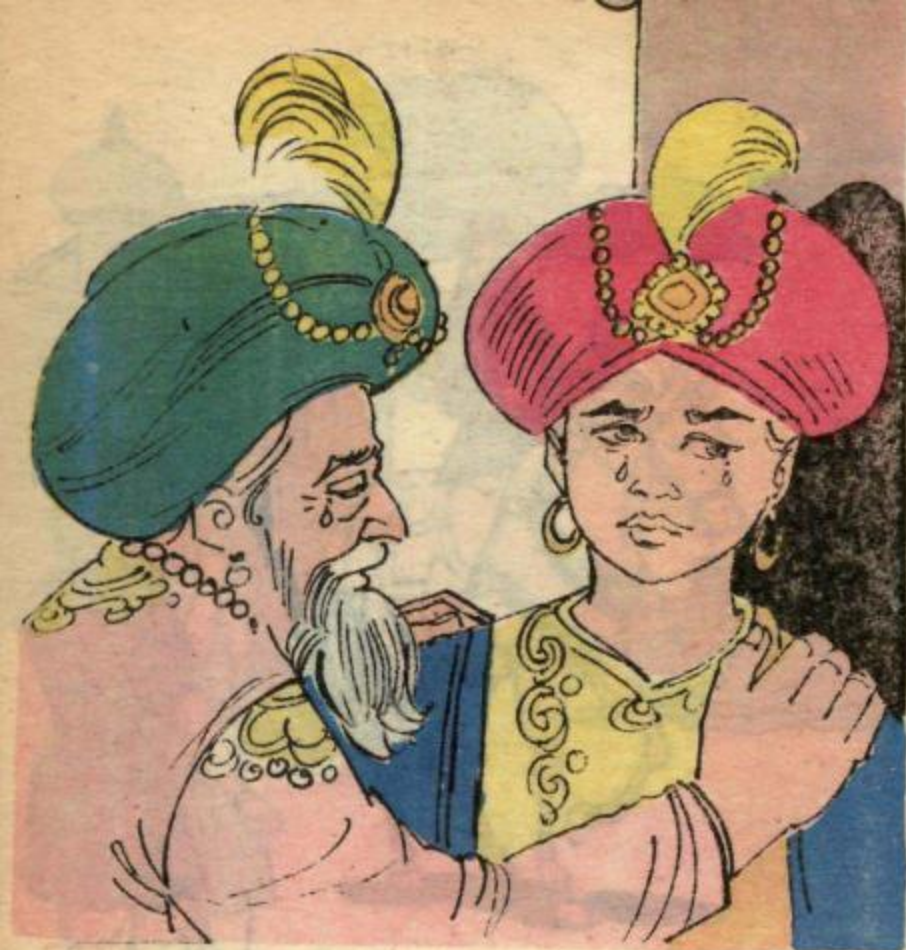


mere trader. He took a firm decision. "Yes, your majesty. As you wish." He did not say anything further.

The royal wedding was full of pomp and pageantry. For two full days, Prince Sindbad had nothing else to do than receiving the people of the kingdom and accepting gifts from them. How he wished his mother was with him to watch the people shower their affection on him.

But his joy as well as the people's rejoicings were short-lived. The princess suddenly contracted a disease from which she did not recover and was no more in about a week's time. The kingdom was plunged into gloom





and the people gathered at the courtyard of the palace to pay their respect to the princess who had so much endeared herself to the people.

The king was the epitome of grief and could not be reconciled to the loss of his loving daughter. His sorrow was doublefold because of another factor. According to the custom of the land, if the wife were to predecease the husband, he too should follow her to the grave—alive! The king would thus lose not only his son-in-law, but a successor to him.

Nobody had the courage to inform Prince Sindbad of the custom and to prepare him for his burial along with

the dead princess. In the end, the king himself decided to undertake the mission. Sindbad was shocked beyond belief. "What do you say, your majesty?" he almost shouted. "Why should I abide by your custom? I belong to another country!" he protested.

"My dear son-in-law," replied the king, "the moment you married one amongst us, you became a citizen of this land, and the laws apply equally to everybody. Why! If my queen were to die before me, I too would be buried along with her! And if I die earlier, she accompanies me to the grave. That's the custom here, and nobody can break the rule."

Sindbad now knew that there was no escape for him. His death would be just a matter of days. He was told that the princess would be buried in a cavern and the funeral would be a grand affair as the deceased was the princess of the land.

As Sindbad had introduced the use of saddles for the horses in the kingdom, it was decided that the body of the princess would be taken in a horse-drawn carriage. On it sat Sindbad, also attired in all finery. Behind the cortege drove the king in another carriage. Mourners followed behind the two carriages and the populace



joined the procession, which took a long time to reach the cavern on the outskirts of the kingdom.

The cave had a pit into which the body was lowered. Near the body was placed loaves of bread and a pitcher of water. The body lay on a bed of flowers strewn on the ground. Sindbad was carried by six royal attendants three on one side and three on the other and placed on a decorated wooden cot which was then lowered into the pit and placed beside the body of the princess. And for his consumption had been kept more loaves of bread and water in a large sized pot.

When the torch-bearers moved away from the cavern, it was pitch dark inside, except for a faint ray of sunlight that came through the mouth of the cave. Sindbad took some time to reconcile himself to his fate. He lay on the cot, as there was hardly any room to stand in the pit. He lay there thinking of any possibility of escape. After all, he had faced dangers to his life, but somehow he had always managed to escape. He was determined to try his luck once again.

Sindbad was feeling hungry, but resisted eating the bread kept for him. He thought he should, as her one-time husband, spare the loaves for the princess. So, he did not eat them. But



he drank the water, and stood up in whatever space was available. He examined the wall of the pit. Fortunately they were not wet and slippery. He decided he would try to climb out of the pit. He took off all finery he was wearing and threw them on the cot. With minimum clothes on, he knew he would be able to climb without much difficulty.

His progress was slow because he had to grope in the dark for safe grips on the rock. As he went up, he could see the walls of the pit more clearly in whatever light came through the opening of the cave. He took every step carefully and cautiously and



ultimately he came out of the pit and made it to the mouth of the cavern. Both his hands had bruises all over. Unmindful of the bleeding palms, Sindbad ran as fast as he could. He had no idea where the sea coast would be, but he took the direction from where a cool wind was blowing. He soon reached the seashore.

Sindbad scanned the horizon for any passing ship. For some time, he could not see a single ship. Then, one came along, and luckily for him, it was not far away from the shore, as the sea was deep enough for the ship to come as near the shore as possible. One of the crew saw him waving and Sindbad noticed him going in – probably to inform the captain. Soon he saw a boat being lowered and heading towards the shore. He let out a sigh of relief as he climbed on to the boat. After all, he did succeed in escaping what might have been a slow but

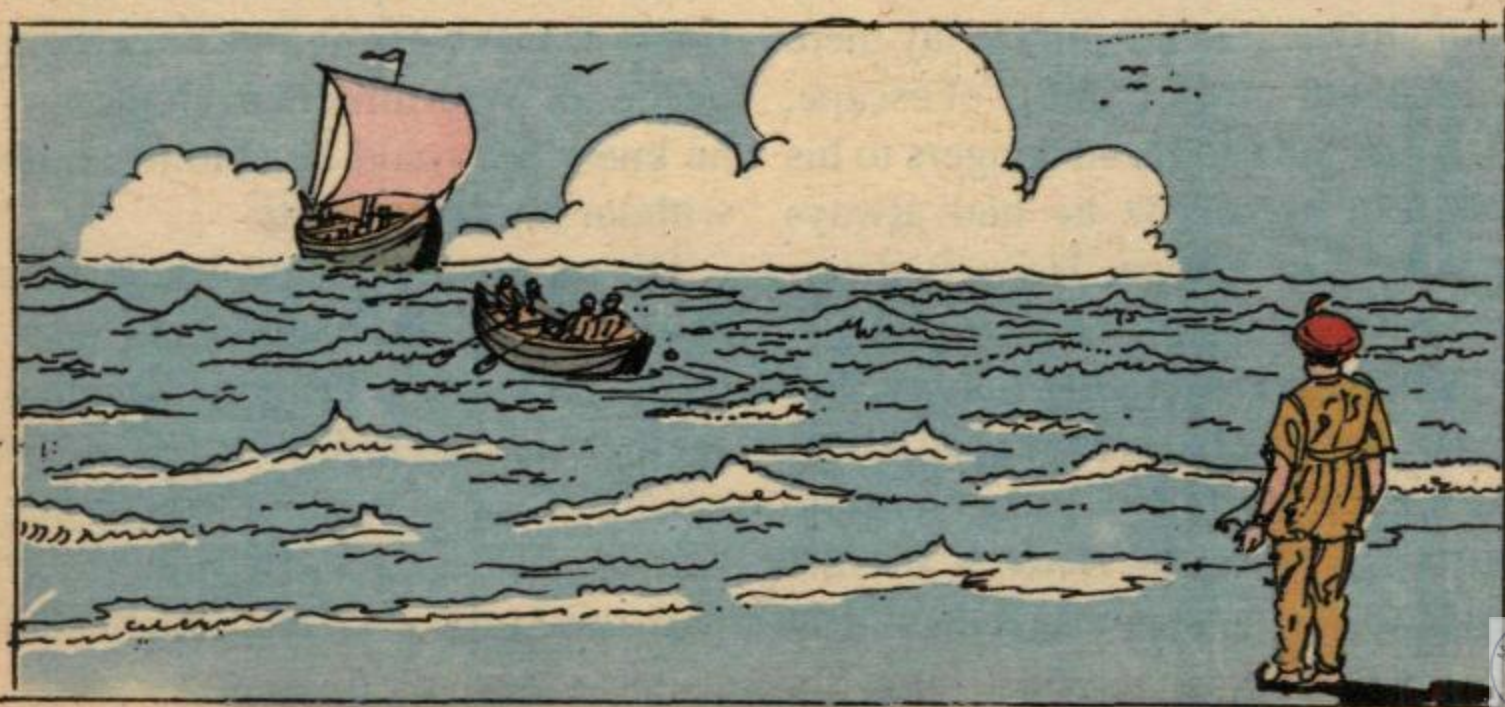
sure death in a dark pit.

The ship took him back to Baghdad, where his mother had almost given up hope of seeing him alive again, as news had reached her that the ship he took had faced a hurricane. "No, mother, I shall not go on another voyage." It was a solemn promise, which Sindbad kept as long as she lived. Her failing health did not give her a long life, and after her passing away, Sindbad wished for a change of atmosphere – like another voyage!



Sindbad's friends did not realise that he had come to a stop. They soon departed, promising to return the next day to hear about his fifth voyage. As Hindbad, too, turned towards the door, he felt a tuck at his shoulders, only to see Sindbad smiling. A pearl necklace dangled from his fingers. "A small gift for your wife!" said Sindbad.

(To continue)



NEWS FLASH

A Rare Occurrence

The birth of twins is common. It has been calculated that in 82 deliveries, there could be a pair of twins. Triplets are born once in 6,400 deliveries, while the birth of quadruplets occurs once in 512,000 deliveries; that of quintuplets



once in 41,000,000 deliveries. In June last, an Egyptian mother gave birth to sextuplets – a once in 3,300,000,000 deliveries occurrence! The four baby boys and two girls weighed between .86 and 1.75 kg. The doctors, who performed an operation on the mother, are praying – like many others – that all the six babies should live to write child - birth history.

Who's Who

No, this has no connection with any such reference book; that's how people — friends, teachers, and others — ask themselves when they are face to face with Neena, Neethu, and Nimmi. The

triplets completed four years on June 21. Born to R.S. Pillai, employed in Saudi Arabia, and Valsala, the children were recently admitted to a school in Kerala. The teachers tore their hair for the first few weeks trying to identify who is who. The girls look alike in size, complexion and, of course, in dress. What has come to the teachers' aid is a trace of differences in their character. Many others cannot spot these minor differences, resulting in much amusement to the family. In fact, when friends drop in, the family resorts to some teasing, by calling their names wrongly. By the way, their pet names are Malu, Meenu, and Molu. But who's who?

All Lawyers

This also comes from Kerala. All four sons and the only daughter of a family have taken to law as their profession. Ramachandran, Ramanathan, Ramabhadran, Ramarajan, and Ramadevi are the children of Velu (80 years) and Janaki (70). The eldest—Ramachandran—took his degree in 1971. He is 45 years. He practises in Trichur, like Ramabhadran. Ramanathan and Ramarajan work in Kunnankulam and Paravur, in Kerala. Ramadevi is in Nasik, Maharashtra, where her husband, Asokan, is also a practising lawyer. Ramachandran's wife, Sheila, is about to don the lawyer's black robe. The ageing parents have one great relief: there was never an occasion for them to enter the portals of a court!



Food for thought!

King Saranga of Sagarpuri was a lover of art and had extreme respect for painters and sculptors, musicians and dancers. He invited many of them to stay in his capital.

One day, the king was strolling in the royal garden along with Queen Ranjini, when the court poet Jaidev was ushered into their presence. Saranga was keen to organise and conduct a cultural festival on a grand scale. He wished to honour several artists, and reward them.

Somehow, the queen did not relish the poet's presence at that moment when she and the king were enjoying a quiet evening in the garden. Unfortunately, she did not know that the king had sent for Jaidev. Besides, she was not a connoisseur of any form of art.

Queen Ranjini listened to their conversation for some time and then remarked: "I don't think any good

will come out of this festival. What people need is a square meal every day. There's no use wasting money on artists. That money can very well be spent on feeding several people who are otherwise starving."

Jaidev was crestfallen on hearing the queen's comments. He guessed what was actually in her mind. He wanted to do something to change her opinion. But it was not the appropriate time to try and reform her. Nothing would go into her mind at that moment. So, Jaidev just went away after taking leave of the king and queen. Everything has an appropriate time to promote and achieve. Only then will any effort succeed. Jaidev was conscious of this. The king had a different approach. "Man needs, besides food, some entertainment and lighter moments in life," he said.

The queen was not willing to accept the king's argument. Naturally, there

was a heated exchange of words between them. But Ranjini stood her ground. "Man needs only air, water, and food. Anything else is not so essential."

King Saranga knew that his queen's stand was not all that right. Just as food is essential for the body, art can lead to mental satisfaction and joy. An art lover that he was, Saranga had no two opinions about this aspect of art. "Man needs something more than food," he repeated.

The arguments between the king and the queen went on and on, when the arrival of the court-jester was announced. Both Saranga and Ranjini presented their viewpoints and asked

him how he would decide the issue.

The court-jester understood what the queen was aiming at. She did not want the royal treasury to go empty by encouraging artists and promoting art. Unless he succeeded in making her change her opinion, the future of artists in Sagarpuri would be in jeopardy. He thought for a while and then called one of the attendants on duty in the garden. He asked him: "What does man need most?"

"Food!" the attendant replied.

"Would he be satisfied with food alone?" prompted the court-jester. "Wouldn't he need some entertainment to pass time? Would he only wait for his food?"



"Of course, he'll wait for his food," said the attendant.

The court-jester now turned to the queen and said, "Your majesty, please give me a week's time and I shall give you my opinion."

Queen Ranjini agreed. The court-jester took the attendant with him and locked him up in a room. However, he was given food at the appointed hours. A week later, he took him back to the king and queen. He asked him in their presence: "How was the past one week?"

"Oh! I found it difficult to pass time," replied the attendant. "I spent the whole time only thinking of when I would get out of the room. Man really does need something more than mere food. There must be some entertainment to pass time."

The court-jester turned to the queen. "See that! At first he said, man needs only food. When I gave him enough

to eat on all seven days, he says he yearned for some entertainment. What do *you* say?"

"I think he's right," said the queen simply.

"Man should not live just for food," remarked the court-jester. "Food is for living, not the other way round. Food, of course, will help the body keep its health and strength. But along with physical strength, man has to improve his intelligence and wisdom. Art will really help this."

King Saranga looked at Ranjini, who was now feeling ashamed of her views. "Poor man—this attendant! He had to suffer for a whole week all because of our controversy!" said the king.

The queen removed one of her necklaces and presented it to the attendant. "Thank you for putting some sense into me," she said, turning to the court-jester.





Coastal Journeys - 1

KUTCH & SAURASHTRA

Text : Meera Nair ♦ Artworks : Gop Kumar

The coastline of India is one of the longest in the world. It is more than 7,500 kilometres long. Along the coast lie limestone cliffs, lagoons, miles of sandy beaches, monuments, ancient and modern cities, ports and fishing villages.

Our journey along the coast begins from Kutch in Gujarat.



To the east and north of Kutch lie the bleak, desolate, salt-flecked desert of the **Rann of Kutch**.

The Rann comes to life in winter when hordes of migratory birds like the flamingos come from far-off places in Central Asia to escape the cold winter. The Rann is the only area in India where flamingos are still known to breed.



Unique to this region, is the reddish-grey or pale-chestnut-coloured wild ass or the ghor khar. It has a remarkable capacity for survival. Its body cells do not get dehydrated easily and can hold reserves of water. The **Dhangadhra Sanctuary**, covering an area of 4840 sq.km was established in 1973 to protect the wild ass.

Wild ass

The tranquility of this region received a rude jolt when the Rann of Kutch became a

major scene of action during the 1965 Indo-Pak war.

The Kutch coastline has a string of ports : **Mandvi, Mundra, Jakhau, Lakhpatri, Koteswar and Kandla**. **Mandvi**, the largest of these ancient ports had ships laden with dates, grain, timber, rhinoceros hides, cardamom, pepper, ginger, silks and drugs arriving from Malabar, Muscat and the African coast and taking in return cotton, cloth, sugar, oil, butter and alum. When these arrived, the rich merchant-fleet-owners of Mandvi would climb the high tower near the lighthouse, called the Tower of Wagers, to stake fortunes upon whose ship would be sighted first.

However, it is **Kandla**, where a port was built in 1955, which is considered as a sea-gate to north-west India. This natural harbour which came up mainly due to the tireless efforts of Maharawal Khengarji III, the Maharaja of Kutch, has a Free Trade Zone, the first of its kind in the country. Near Kandla is located the largest salt works in Asia.



At the westernmost tip of the peninsula lies **Dwarka**. The city Krishna built for the Yadavas is believed to be submerged in the sea. Legend has it that the sea had given Krishna 12 *yojanas* of land on which to build his king-



Temple of Dwarka

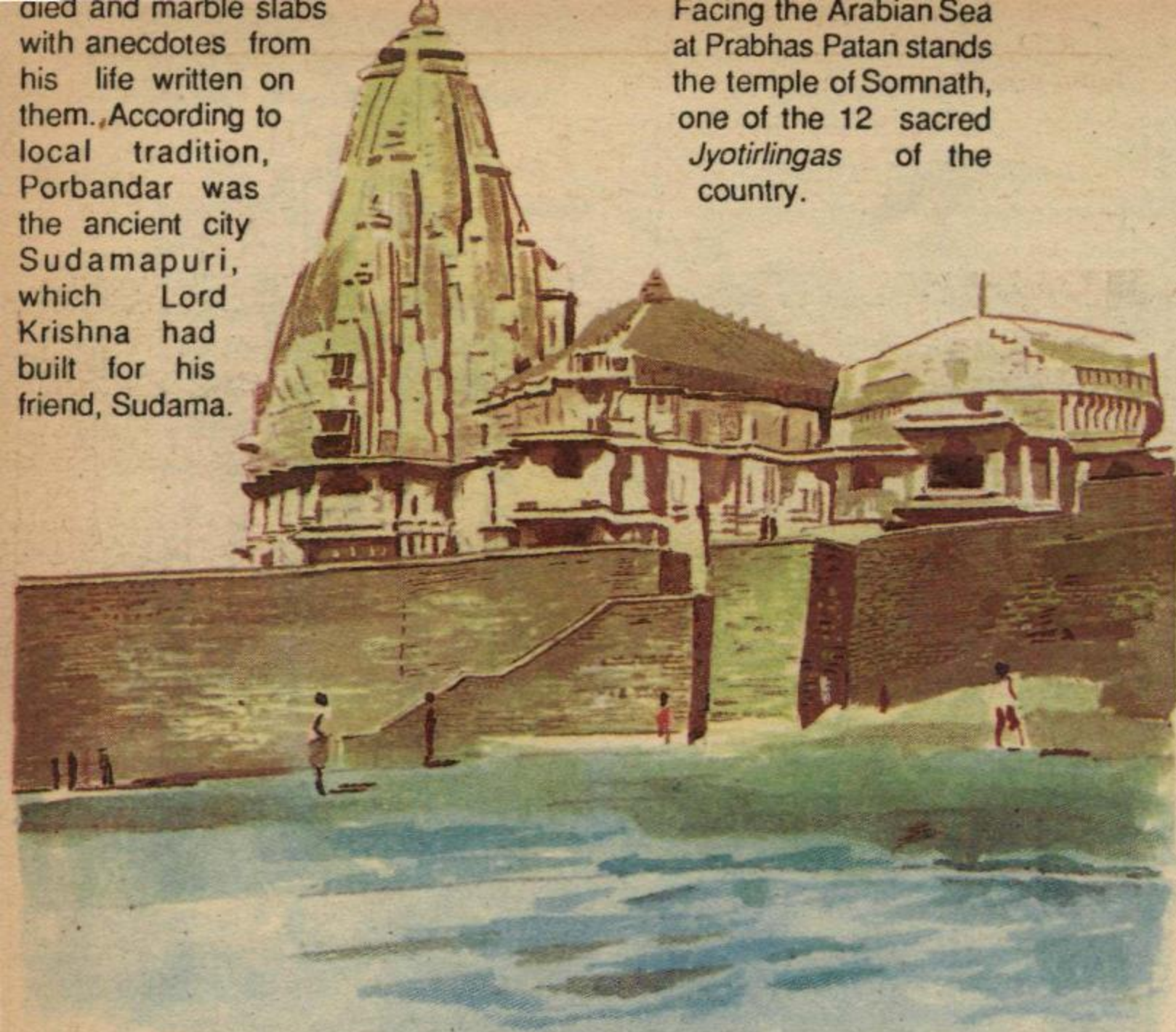


dom, but reclaimed it soon after his death. Interestingly, marine archaeologists have found evidence of a submerged city just off the coast.

The limestone city of **Porbandar**, where Mahatma Gandhi was born, lies along the coastal road to Somnath. The Kirti Mandir contains the room where he was born, a spinning hall, a prayer hall, a 79-foot high spire representing the age at which he

died and marble slabs with anecdotes from his life written on them. According to local tradition, Porbandar was the ancient city Sudamapuri, which Lord Krishna had built for his friend, Sudama.

Facing the Arabian Sea at Prabhas Patan stands the temple of Somnath, one of the 12 sacred *Jyotirlingas* of the country.



The Somnath Temple

History has it that the temple was built in the first century A.D. The temple prospered with the rich offerings various kings made to the lord and became the richest, the biggest and the most sacred temple in the country. The lamps that lit the *garbhagriha* were studded with jewels and the temple's huge bell had a chain of solid gold. But it was this wealth that led to its ruin. It was plundered and destroyed in 1025 A. D. by Mahmud of Ghazni, who required a large caravan of elephants, camels and mules to carry away the wealth. The temple was reconstructed by the rulers of Gujarat and Malwa. In the next seven hundred years, it was looted and destroyed six times. The present temple was consecrated on May 11, 1951, when Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of free India, installed the *jyotirlinga* on the same foundation on which the earlier temples were built.

THE LITTLE NEW KING



A long time ago, when the earth was mostly covered with dense forests, there lived a huge proud tiger. One fine day, he strolled down a jungle path feeling himself grand and majestic. His thick and striped tail swung, his ears stood upright, and his face turned skywards with an air of importance. He advanced slowly, his paws falling rhythmically and pompously, and singing with a flair:

*"I am the mighty king
Of forest, woods, and glen.
With joy does my heart sing*

Of my realm and cosy den."

Thump - thump - thumpety - thump appeared the mighty elephant from the opposite direction, with a swing of his hips and a swish of his tail. Both tiger and elephant came to a halt and stood face to face. For, the path lined with dense thickets was too narrow to let them cross.

"How dare you obstruct the king's way, you Long Nose? Just move off!" thundered the angry tiger.

"You, the king? Ho! Ho! Ho! You're but a wee little fellow!" laughed the



pachyderm.

"You big talker!" shouted back the tiger. "Let's have a wager between us to prove our strength."

"Very well, then," agreed the other. "But what sort of bet?"

"Whoever has the mightiest voice will be victorious. Mind you, if I win, I'm going to eat you up! If I lose, then you may do whatever you wish with me," proposed the tiger with a sly smile.

The elephant nodded his consent swaying his trunk, though he was not so very confident about the outcome of the contest. The tiger stretched his jaws and let out a mighty roar. Indeed,

it was mightier than the mightiest of roars. It seemed as though there was an earthquake, as the forest shook with the vibration. Its denizens stood petrified and some swooned from sheer terror. Berries, fruits, and coconuts dropped from the trees and even chicks popped out of the eggs in their nestlings.

Then the jungle fell silent, as the tiger stopped roaring and shook off drops of perspiration.

Now the elephant threw back his trunk and trumpeted loud and clear. The sound feebly floated up stirring the leaves of the trees and did not draw anyone's attention.

"That settles it! My mighty voice has brought down fruits from the trees, whereas yours has not even woken up the wee little insects from their slumber! Now prepare yourself for me to eat you up," the tiger jubilantly blurted out, licking his lips.

The poor elephant could not but agree that he was the loser. Large drops of tears formed in his little eyes as he remembered his loving family waiting for his return. But, alas, die he must now. So deep was his sorrow that it touched the not-so-wicked heart of the tiger.

"All right, do not weep. I won't eat you up at once. I grant you a week's

time to take proper leave of your wife and children. But mind you, return to this spot at the end of the period," said the tiger sympathetically.

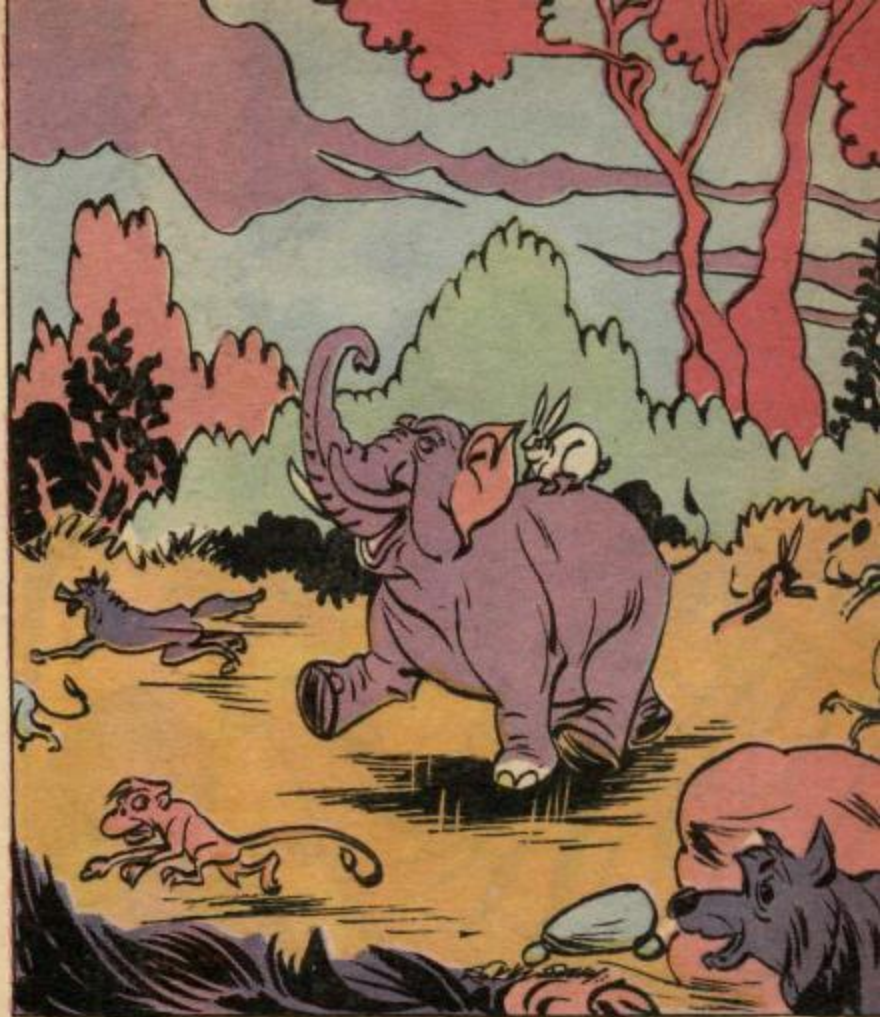
The elephant sadly wended his way homewards. He broke the heart-rending news to his family and devoted his time to training his children in making a living when he would no longer be there to guide them.

The poor elephant pensively trudged along his favourite haunts in the forest with a heavy heart and tearful eyes. Suddenly he heard a warm and friendly tone. "Good-day, Elephant! Something seems to worry you a lot. Tell me, what is amiss? Perhaps I may be able to help you," said the rabbit appearing from a bush.

The elephant readily confided in him and recounted the sad fate that awaited him on the morrow, and the events that had led him to the unhappy situation. For, the little rabbit was known throughout the jungle for his goodness and wisdom and all the animals respected and obeyed him.

The rabbit reflected for a while and then said in a consoling voice, "Don't you worry, Friend. I have a plan to save your life. Let's meet here tomorrow."

So, at sunrise the following day both met at the appointed place. The



rabbit climbed on to the elephant's back. "Now, slowly make your way where you are to meet the tiger. Only, let me pluck a bunch of ripe bananas as we go," he said.

The nervous pachyderm did the bidding of the rabbit. But, as he proceeded, something really baffled him. He heard terrified cries of animals and sounds of scampering feet.

"Don't get agitated by what you see and hear all around you. It is all part of my plan to save your life," explained the wise rabbit.

Meanwhile, the tiger, too, was approaching the spot where they were to meet. In fact, he should have been





smacking his lips at the thought of what lay in store for him—a mighty elephant to relish for his meal. But alas, the distressing cries of animals that rang all around upset him and he was far from being cheerful. In fact, when he figured out what actually they have all been saying, he missed a heart-beat.

"The wise rabbit has triumphed over the elephant, Indeed, he's the great king of us all! Now, he's looking for the tiger with a bent To box his ears and bring about his downfall!"

This was what echoed all over the

forest. All the creatures marvelled at the sight of the rabbit riding the elephant. Their commonsense told them that the rabbit would not be where he was unless he was the king!

"What! A wee little rabbit has conquered the huge elephant? Impossible! I've outwitted him and will soon eat him up!" said the tiger to himself, not very confidently though.

The fearful scamperings continued with great fervour. The shouts and cries of the animals increased two-fold. The tiger felt extremely nervous and lonely, and badly needed a companion.

"Come, Friends! I'll do you no harm nor will I let the rabbit touch you. It is I who have triumphed over the elephant. Soon, he'll be here to be eaten up by me. Give me some company and I won't mind sharing with you the titbits," called out the tiger imploringly.

But no one paid any heed to his words.

The Monkey, meanwhile, was intently watching the proceedings, sitting on the topmost branch of a tree. The rabbit, in fact, disliked him because of his gibberish and deceitful nature and, therefore, had not taken him as an accomplice in his heroic plan. When he heard the tiger calling



for company, the monkey swung down and with a leap and a bound stood in front of him.

"Hi Tiger! I'm ready to be your friend!" he said with a chuckle.

"Very well, then," the tiger at once agreed, happy to find at least one faithful ally.

"It seems we've a battle ahead of us. On no account should we allow the enemy to separate us for, you know, in unity lies our strength. So, let's tie our tails together. Then whatever happens we'll always remain united," suggested the monkey, thinking that the tiger might betray him anytime and gallop off leaving him in the lurch.

The tiger thought it to be a good idea for he, too, had some doubts about his companion's trustworthiness. So, with their tails tightly knotted together they reached the appointed place. But, all the denizens of the forest continued to dart, giving out their terrified cries. Both the friends did feel a great uneasiness as they awaited the elephant.

Soon, the elephant arrived with his slow heavy tread, while the rabbit majestically sat on his back. He was eating something with great relish. Both the monkey and the tiger were taken aback to see this unusual sight.



"Oh, the elephant's brains are so delicious!" exclaimed the rabbit, eating the bananas one after another from the bunch in front of him. "Now I shall know how tasteful are the brains of the tiger."

"Let's get away from here while there's still time," whispered the tiger to his companion, trembling with fear.

"Don't be a stupid ass," chided the monkey. "He's not eating the brains of the elephant. It's only bananas."

"How can you be so sure?" asked the tiger in a faltering tone.

"I'm absolutely certain, because I eat bananas daily," replied the monkey plainly.



Now the tiger felt reassured, while the rabbit eyed him with an amusing smile.

"Hello, Monkey!" called the rabbit cheerfully. "It's very nice of you to have kept your promise and bring the tiger to me. You can be trusted, after all."

"You deceitful creature! You offered me your warm friendship while you're a trusted ally of my enemy! Now I understand why you proposed that we should be tied together by our tails. You tell me the rabbit is eating bananas, while in fact he's enjoying the brains of the elephant! Now I'm not going to let him eat *my* brains!" shrieked the tiger, shaking with fear and anger. He was sure that the terrifying cries with which the whole for-

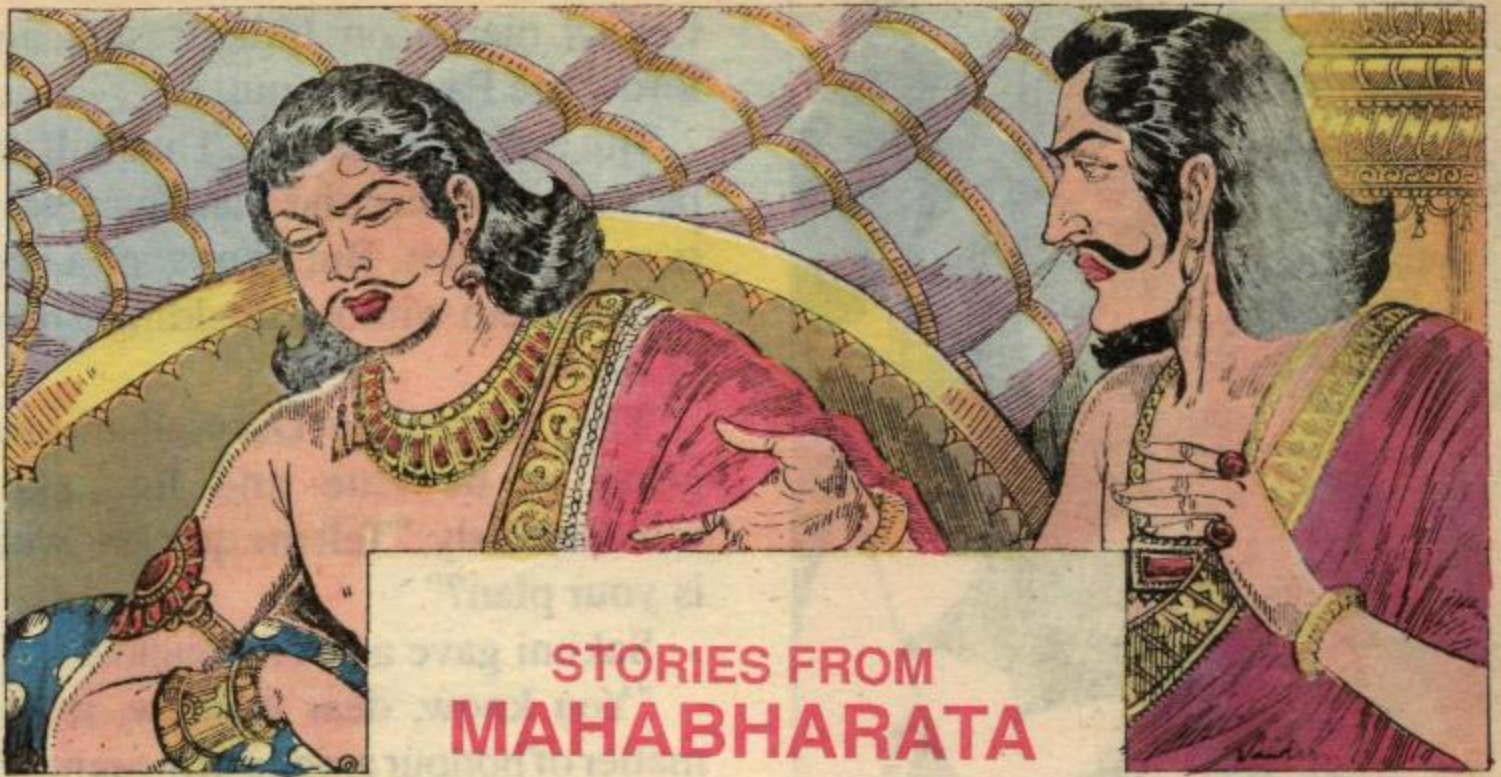
est rang was not untrue, after all! The tiger bounded off tugging the monkey behind him.

Through bushes and trees blindly sped the tiger. His thoroughly bruised and battered companion suddenly got entangled between two branches and the tiger screeched to a halt. The clever monkey lost no time in undoing the knot on their tails and fled in the opposite direction. The tiger, now feeling free once again, began to flee without even a backward glance.

All the other animals rejoiced at the success of the wise rabbit's plan. It was not before long that he was rightfully crowned the king of the forest. But the tiger and the monkey remained sore enemies till the end of the days.

— Retold by Anup Kishore Das





STORIES FROM MAHABHARATA

The story so far:

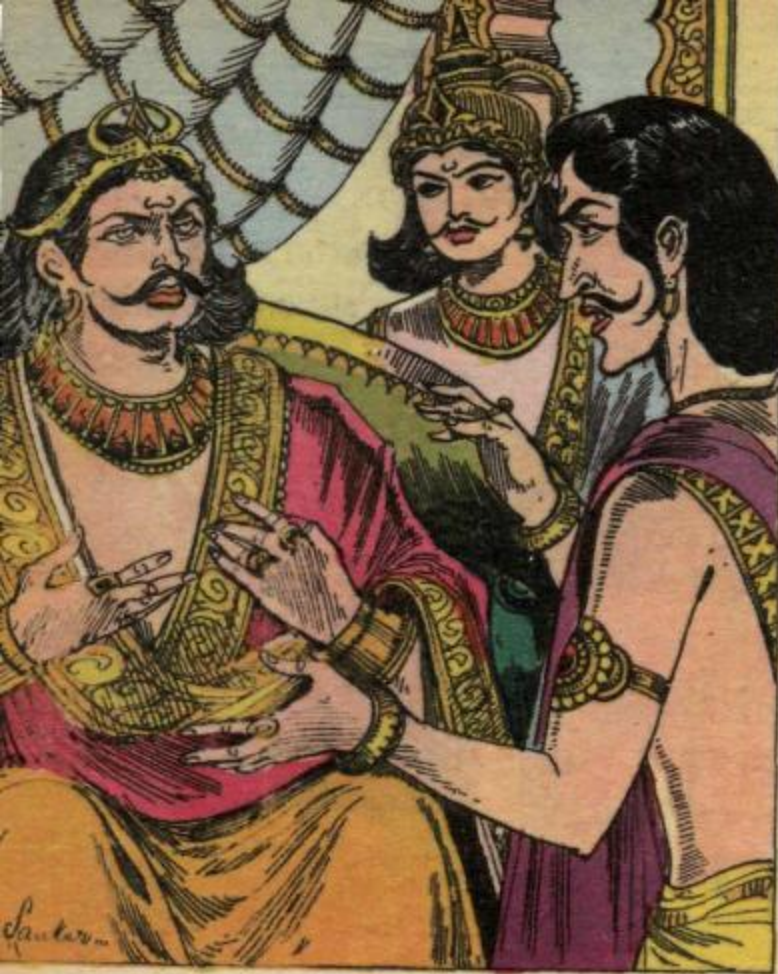
Yudhishtira, the eldest son of Pandu and ruler of Indraprastha, performed the Imperial Sacrifice and assumed the title of Emperor. This great ceremony, attended by all the ruling monarchs, was marred by death, when Sisupala, King of Chedi, scorned any honour being bestowed on Sree Krishna. This led to a fight between Sisupala and Krishna, and Sisupala was slain.

Duryodhana returned to Hastina-pura from the Imperial Yajna burning within with envy at the thought of Yudhishtira being recognized as the emperor, and it sickened his warped mind to think of the prosperity of his cousins, and the eagerness of so many kings to become their allies.

He was so much obsessed with his thoughts that at first he did not hear his evil uncle Sakuni who began to

speak to him fondly. Sakuni again asked Duryodhana, "Why do you look so pale? What is troubling you?"

Duryodhana burst out in an angry torrent of words. "Yudhishtira and his brothers are treated as though they were gods! Before the eyes of all the kings at the Yajna, Sisupala was brutally slain. But not one had the courage to avenge him. Bah! They were happy to barter their honour for Yudhishtira's goodwill. I cannot be in



peace whilst the Pandavas regale themselves in splendour and glory!"

"You should not let petty jealousy disturb you!" retorted his uncle. "The Pandavas are your cousins and you should be proud of their prosperity. Are you not equally great? Your brothers and relatives stand by your side. Then you have Bhishma, one who can command victory; Drona the mighty archer and his son Aswathama. And do not forget the mighty Karna and Kripa. You could conquer the whole world if you please. Why give away to grief?"

"If that is true," said Duryodhana, jumping to his feet, "why do we wait?"

Let us march on Indraprastha and throw the Pandavas out!"

But Sakuni said, "No. That will not be easy, because the Pandavas have powerful allies. But I know of a way to oust them without shedding a drop of blood."

This seemed to Duryodhana too good to be true and he asked incredulously, "Tell me quickly, what is your plan?"

Sakuni gave an evil chuckle.

"You know, dear nephew, it is a matter of honour among princes never to refuse a challenge to a game of dice. And you also know that Yudhishtira is passionately fond of the game. So he will certainly accept an invitation to a game. Then all we have to do is to see that he loses."

"How can we be sure of that?"

"Yudhishtira is a poor player," said Sakuni with a smile, "whereas I know more about the crooked tricks of dice than any man living. Now, let us go and induce your father to send an invitation to Yudhishtira."

The blind king, Dhritarashtra, listened to what the two conspirators had to say, but he shook his head in sorrow.

"Even if you win, this game of dice will lead to enmity. And once passions are aroused, blood will flow throughout the land."

But Duryodhana refused to listen to his father. "Why dwell on bloodshed? A game of dice is an ancient pastime which all princes enjoy. And if we are able to win, what is the harm?"

"I know, I am getting old," Dhritarashtra said coldly. "But what you suggest is fraught with danger and one day you may repent this madness."

In the end, tired of trying to dissuade Duryodhana, the king agreed to an invitation being sent to Yudhishtira. But later the same day he discussed the matter in secret with Vidura.

Having listened to the king, Vidura said sadly, "This may lead to the

destruction of our clan."

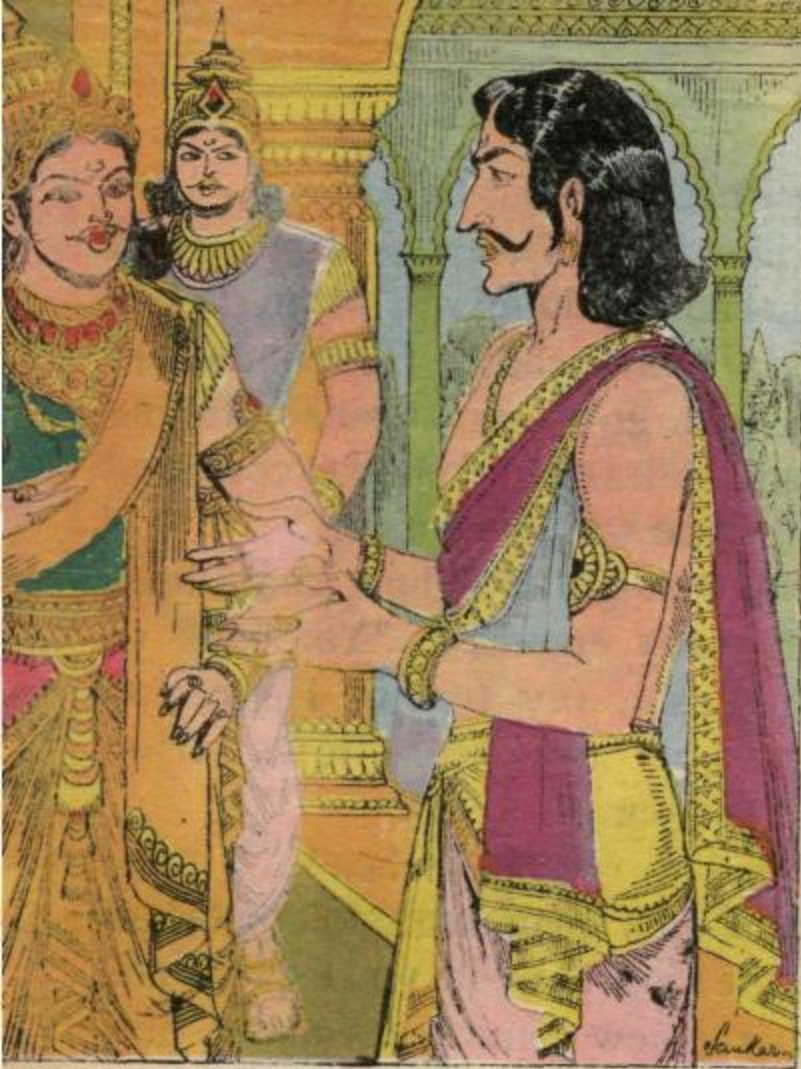
Dhritarashtra knew in his heart that what he was doing was wrong, but he had not much choice. He commanded Vidura to go to Indraprastha and invite Yudhishtira on his behalf to come and play dice with his cousins.

At the sight of Vidura, Yudhishtira anxiously enquired, "You look so downcast, my friend. Have you brought any bad news from Hastinapura?"

Vidura shook his head. "I have come on a special mission on behalf of the king, to invite you to come and see the new gaming hall and to play dice."

"Wagering games tend to create





quarrels, which wise men should avoid. Do you suggest that I should accept this invitation?" asked Yudhishtira.

Vidura said coldly, "Everyone is aware that playing dice is the root to many evils. But I have been commanded to invite you, and you alone should decide whether or not to accept it."

Despite Vidura's obvious lack of enthusiasm, Yudhishtira decided to go to Hastinapura, accompanied by Draupadi and all his brothers.

The Pandavas were accorded a royal welcome on their arrival at Hastinapura, and it was a refreshing

occasion to greet their elders such as Bhishma, Drona, and Kripa.

The following morning, Duryodhana lost no time in conducting Yudhishtira and others to the new gaming hall which was certainly a most lavish piece of architecture.

When everyone had finished admiring the hall, Sakuni announced to Yudhishtira that the roll for playing dice had been spread and that he was welcome to begin it.

Yudhishtira sat down and asked, "And where is my opponent?"

"My uncle Sakuni will match his skill against yours," replied Duryodhana. This was not at all to Yudhishtira's liking, as he knew he was evenly matched against Duryodhana, but Sakuni was a different matter, for the fellow was an expert with rather a villainous reputation. However, it was too late to argue. Yudhishtira merely shrugged his shoulders and picked up the dice.

The hall was crowded with onlookers. Whilst the Pandava princes viewed the game with interest and enthusiasm, Bhishma, Vidura and Dhritarashtra sat there unhappy in the knowledge that the game could end on a vicious note. But there was nothing they could do to prevent it.

At first, luck seemed to be on the

side of Yudhishtira, but that did not last and then he began to continuously. Was it ill luck or was it Sakuni's trickery?

At first they wagered for jewels and later for gold and then chariots and horses. When Yudhishtira had lost all these, he staked his elephants, his armies, his kingdom and even his servants, and lost them too.

Eventually all his possessions were lost, even his own jewellery and the jewellery his brothers were wearing. But Yudhishtira in his stubborn madness refused to stop playing and even wagered his brothers, and lost them with everything else.

The wicked Sakuni asked, "Is there anything more you can offer?"

Yudhishtira replied, "Yes. Here is

myself. If you win, I shall be your slave."

Sakuni promptly accepted the offer and casting the dice, won that wager too. Then jumping to his feet, Sakuni announced to the onlookers that all the five Pandava princes were now his lawful slaves. Turning to Yudhishtira, he said in a mocking voice, "There is still one jewel you possess, by which you can regain all that you have lost."

Yudhishtira was horrified to see that Sakuni was pointing at Draupadi, his queen. But now he could not stop, and in a desperate voice, said, "I pledge her."

Exclamations of distress came from the elders. For they suspected that this marked the beginning of the end.



Associated with temples, churches

Captain Cook, the British naval explorer, went to the Pacific island of Tahiti in 1769 and there found a tree with some exotic flowers in the neighbourhood of temples. He called it 'Thespesia' which, in Greek, means 'divine'. Even in India, this tree is grown near temples and churches. It is popularly known as Portia Tree, Tulip Tree, and also Umbrella Tree, because its branches are rather closely set and they look like a dense crown. In India, where it is commonly found especially in the southern peninsula, it is called *galgaiavi* in Telugu, *kallal* (Tamil), *chandamaram* (Malayalam) and *arasi* (Kannada). In Hindi, Marathi, and Gujarati, it is *bhendi*, and in Bengali and Punjabi, *parash*.

The botanical name is *Thespesia populnea*, where the latter word refers to its poplar-like leaves, which are broad and heart-shaped and rather stiff. They are alternately set on the branches. The apex tapers into a fine point. The leaves do fall off, but the tree remains evergreen.

The flowers are a bright yellow

and have a purple 'eye' inside. They turn brick-red or pink in course of time. The fruits are globular and green at first, slowly turning brown and then black. The flowers appear all through the year, but more of them are seen during the cold season.

The timber is tough and has a fine grain. As it is resistant to water, it is widely used for boat-building, cart-wheels, and boxes. The fruits, leaves, and roots have medicinal properties.



CHYAVANA

In a lonely hermitage lived Puloma, wife of the sage Bhrigu. She was soon to become a mother.

One day, when she was resting alone, a demon tried to kidnap her. Out of her womb suddenly emerged her son and challenged the demon to a fight. The demon took to his heels.

The child was named Chyavana, meaning the untimely born.

As Chyavana grew up, he became a sage. He sat in deep meditation on the banks of the river Narmada. He forgot time. Around him bushes grew. Not only that. White ants built their hills all around him. Once in a while he opened his eyes, but that was the only sign of life he showed.

One day, a king named Saryata was passing through the forest. His family, too, was with him. Near a lake they stopped for a while. His sons began playing hide and seek, when they saw the blinking eyes of the sage. They hurled pebbles at them, perhaps failing to recognise that they were human eyes.

The angry sage cast a curse on the parents of the boys. This caused them much agony.

The king apologised to the sage, who now came out of his penance. He was looking old and emaciated. Behind the king stood his beautiful young daughter, Sukanya.

The sage withdrew his curse, but proposed to marry the princess. The king was in a dilemma. How could he let his daughter marry an old ascetic?

But Sukanya herself stepped forward and accepted the sage's proposal. They were married. Sukanya lived in the forest, serving her husband.

One day the twins, Aswin Kumars, became their guests. They were the physicians of the gods and they could achieve miracles with their knowledge. They told Princess Sukanya that they could give back her husband his youth, but after that was done, she must be able to recognise him while all the three stood together. If she did not succeed, the sage would once again become his old self.

The princess agreed. The Aswin brothers and sage Chyavana took a dip in a lake and emerged. Alas, all the three looked alike.

But Sukanya had the vision of truth. Their identical appearance did not bewilder her. She identified her husband instantly.

Chyavana composed several hymns, which are still recited.




DO YOU KNOW?

1. How did the White House (U.S. President's residence) get that name?
2. Which was the capital of Tipu Sultan?
3. Who wrote '*Das Capital*'?
4. Who was known as the 'Saint of Sabarmati'?
5. What is the special characteristic of zebras?
6. From where did the Holkars rule?
7. What is the present name of Rhodesia?
8. Which work fetched Rabindranath Tagore the Nobel Prize for literature?
9. When was the first robot created?
10. Who founded the Arya Samaj?
11. Which is the oldest among games?
12. Where are the Kolar Gold mines situated—in which State?
13. A chocolate firm built a whole village for itself. Which firm? Where?
14. Who is the author of '*Geeta Govinda*'?
15. Who invented dynamite?
16. Who was the first woman President of the Indian National Congress?

ANSWERS

1. It was painted white to hide the damage it sustained in a fire accident.
2. Seringapatam
3. Karl Marx
4. Mahatma Gandhi
5. No two zebras have similar stripes
6. Indore—in present day Madhya Pradesh
7. Zimbabwe
8. *Gitanjali*. It was originally written in Bengali and the poet himself translated it into English.
9. In 1962, by Unimation, a firm in the U.S.A.
10. Swami Dayanand Saraswati
11. Polo is reported to have been played in Persia (now Iran) in the first century A.D.
12. Karnataka
13. In Bournville—by Cadbury
14. Jayadeva
15. Alfred Nobel, the Swedish chemist, in 1867.
16. Dr. Annie Besant. She presided over the 1917 session of the Congress.



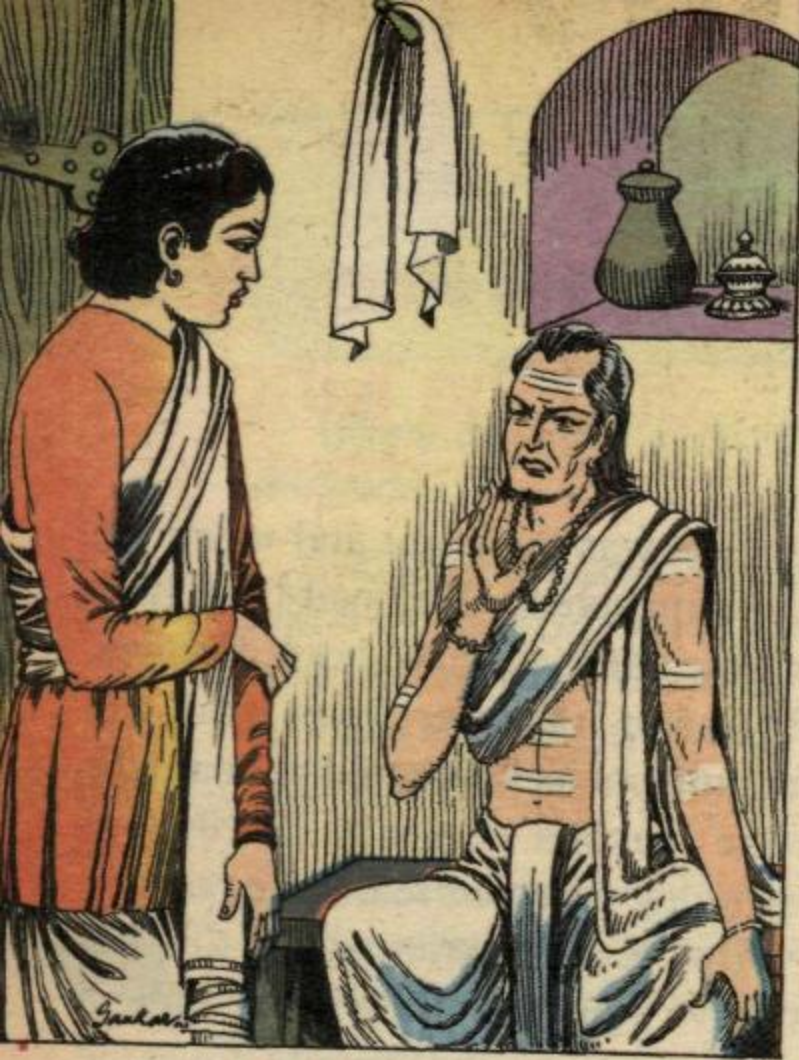


New Tales of King Vikram and the Vampire

The Poet and the King

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time; gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground, with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O King! You seem to be making untiring efforts and without respite, as if you wish to achieve something. I pity you. Instead of enjoying comfortable sleep on a cozy bed, you're still coming after me. I wonder whether you're bent upon doing all this because of senselessness. Sometimes even people with intelligence behave like fools. There was once a poet, who was the best example of senseless behaviour. You must listen to his



story." The vampire then narrated the story of Manohar.

Manohar lived in Mahimapur. This villager did not have much knowledge of language or grammar, but he was clever in composing poetry on any topic. His poems had some attraction in them. He was born into a poor family. As he grew up and exhibited his talents, people advised him to go to the capital and meet King Mahendra Varma and try to secure a place in the king's court.

However, there was a tradition in Mahimapur that whoever wished to gain an entry into the court should have spent a few years in the employ

of a zamindar. No artist or writer ever dared to break this tradition. Manohar was in a dilemma. His talents were enough qualification to get into the court. But there was no short-cut. He decided to be with the zamindar of Vijaypur, Veersimha, and earn his patronage, so that he would put in a word about him to the king.

He disclosed his desire to his father. "It's not an easy joke to secure a place in the royal court," remarked the old man. "Writing poems may not be adequate qualification to take you to the court. You must have some pluck as well. Here prejudices play a big role. You must be careful till you get the patronage of the zamindar. I shall find out an auspicious date for you to start for Vijaypur."

Accordingly, Manohar started on an auspicious day and time, but when he reached Veersimha's place, everything appeared topsy-turvy. His daughter, who was married just a month earlier, had become a widow.

Manohar thought he must have started on the journey at an inauspicious hour. He should not bother the zamindar when he was grieving over his bereavement; moreover he would not be in a mood to meet a stranger. So, Manohar went back home. "I'm not lucky," he told his father. "There



was no use finding out an auspicious time and all that. Now, what shall I do?" Manohar was really desperate.

His father, too, was upset over the developments. He had spent hours on making calculations to find an auspicious time for his son. He thought for a long time, and ultimately came upon a way out.

"Maybe the auspicious time I found for you was not effective," he told Manohar. "Next week, you go and meet the zamindar of Danapur, Dayanidhi. I shall get for you another auspicious time from my friend."

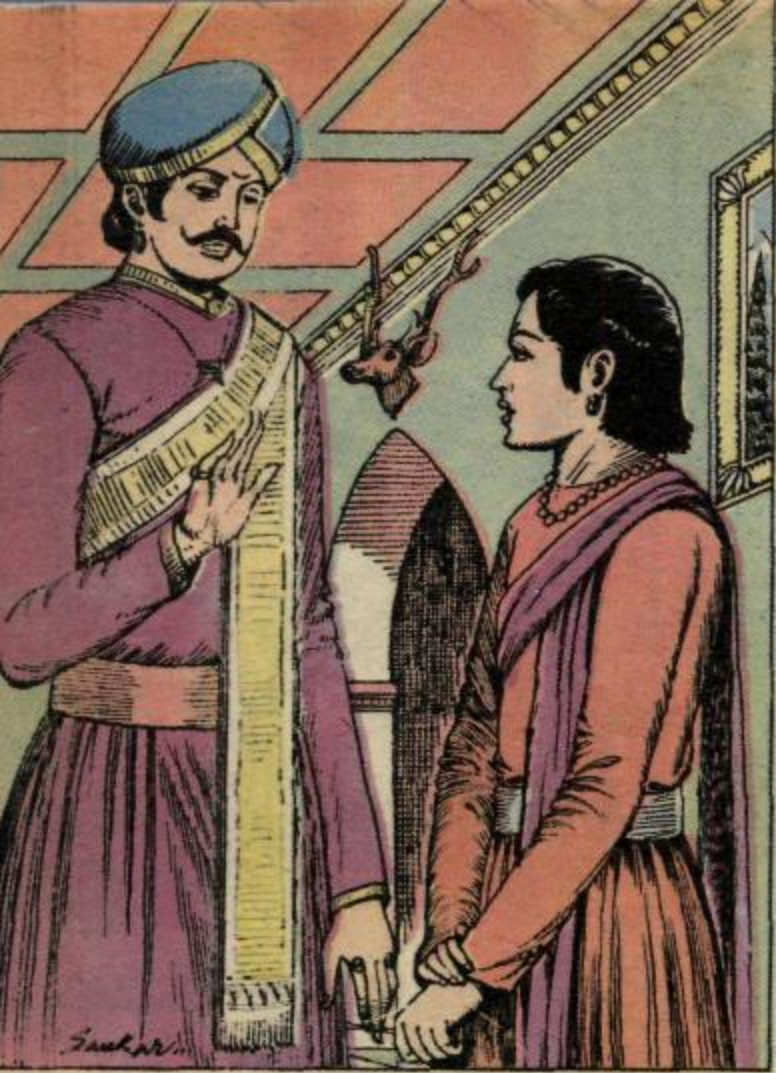
Manohar was consoled. He would be lucky next time. He was itching to get into the royal court. A week later, he started on an auspicious day and at an auspicious time for Danapur where he reached a day after Dayanidhi had taken ill. Manohar was unable to meet him. He waited for a day. On enquiry he was told that the doctors had been unable to diagnose what was wrong with the zamindar and he was in a serious condition.

Manohar wondered. Why was misfortune dogging him everywhere? It was not as if he had not made an effort. There was no point in not making an effort and still wishing for something to happen. But if nothing would happen even after some



effort? Manohar argued the point on his way back home with a heavy heart. He came to a pond from where he quenched his thirst and rested for a while under the shade of a tree.

He had a good view of the surroundings from where he sat—the ripples in the pond made by the slow breeze; birds escaping from the heat of the sun by getting into their tiny nests. Everything that would make a good theme for a poem. But Manohar was ruminating over his failure. "Disappointment a second time!" he mumbled to himself. "Every time, I start at an auspicious time. But what fate! Now, what do I do?"



A little later, he saw a wayfarer getting into the pond and drinking water. He then approached the same shade where Manohar was resting. "Who're you?" he asked Manohar. "Why are you crestfallen?"

Manohar fumbled for an immediate answer. He was so much dejected. Why should he tell all about himself and his fate to a stranger? "I'm nobody else than a frustrated poet," he said, mustering up some courage.

"Poet? Did you say you're frustrated?" exclaimed the stranger. "Show me your palm. Let me take a look at the lines."

Manohar extended his right hand and showed him the palm. The wayfarer took a good look at his palm and then said, "Don't stir out for the next three months. The time is not propitious. After three months, on the first Friday, you set out and go eastward. Halt at the place of the first zamindar and earn his patronage. You'll prosper afterwards."

Manohar was astonished. Who could be this friend and guide? He felt ashamed that he did not show him any courtesy in the beginning. He had a guilty-conscious. Anyway, the stranger did not tarry any longer, to listen to more details from Manohar or to give him any more advice. Manohar heaved a great sigh of relief as he trudged along for home.

He remembered that the first zamindar eastward from his home was Narasimhamurthy. But all that he had heard about him was not complimentary to the zamindar. In fact, people used to carry a lot of tales about him and he was not one who many would befriend, for, he was infamous for disposing of poets and artists giving them only a betel leaf and one single coin. How then could he expect any patronage from such a person? wondered Manohar.

When he believed his father's



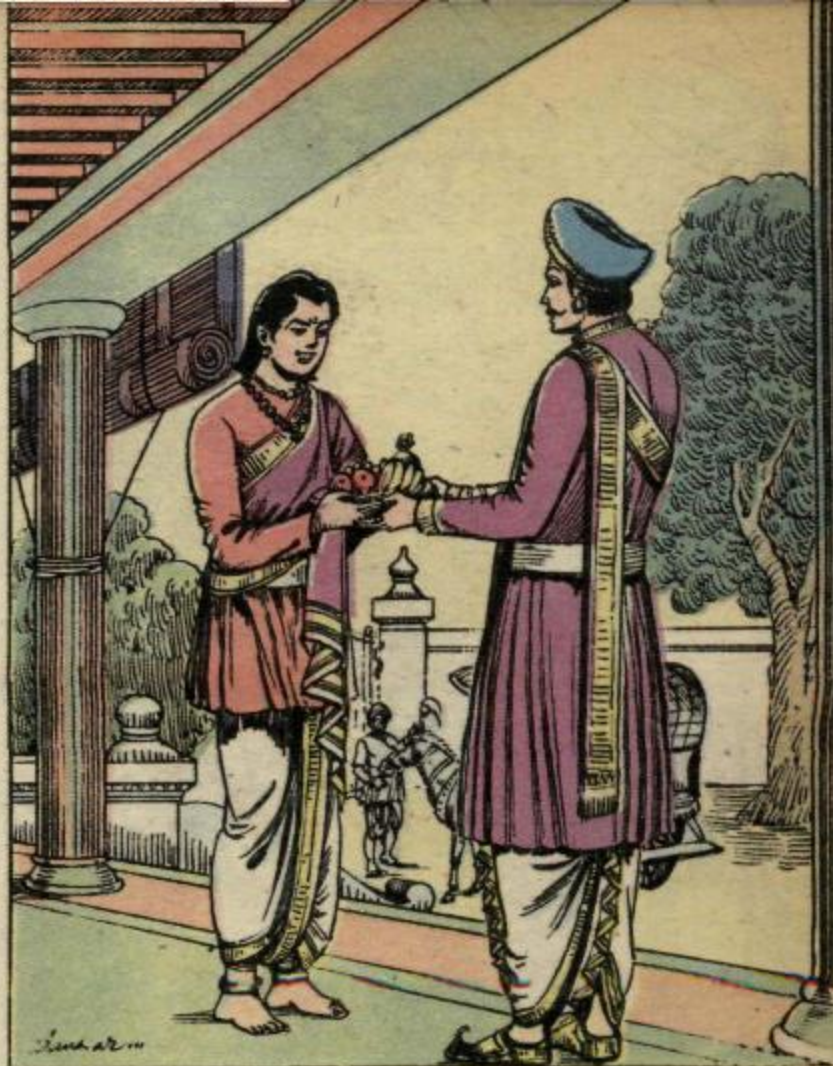
words and instructions, the result was not any satisfying. Now if he were to believe a mere wayfarer and go and work for someone like Narasimhamurthy, what would be his fate? He could almost guess what it would be. At the same time, he did not want to brush aside the advice given by the wayfarer.

He waited for three months to pass. The first Friday after that, Manohar stepped out of his house with great expectations. When he reached the zamindar's mansion, he was received by his dewan. He told Manohar that Narasimhamurthy was observing his father's death anniversary and he would not meet anybody till evening.

"May I wait here till evening?" asked Manohar. "I'm a poet and I would like to recite some of my poems to him. I would be grateful if you could arrange a meeting for me with him."

The dewan took a good look at Manohar. "I feel like helping you, young man," he said. "I shall try my best." The dewan made arrangements for his stay in a room and his food.

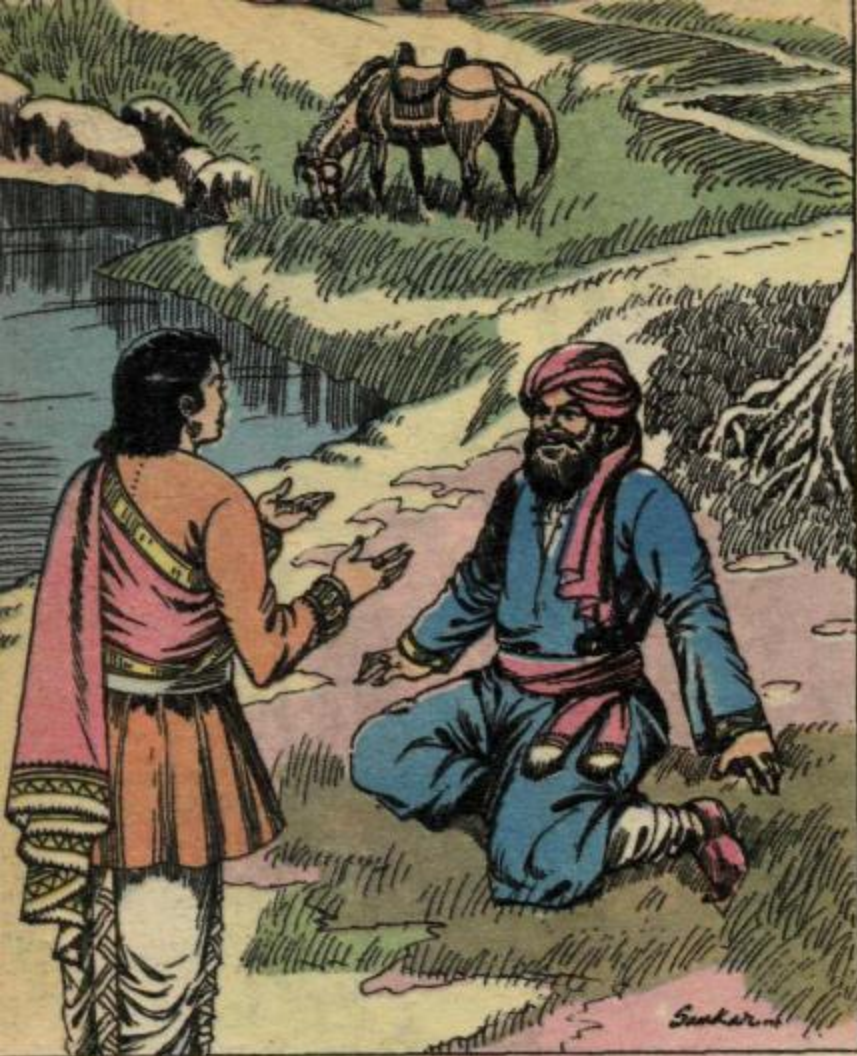
Manohar was still not sure whether a meeting with the zamindar would materialise. Fortune had not shown her full face to him. However, the dewan's assurance and the advice



given by the wayfarer three months ago remained fresh in his memory. He decided to wait till evening.

Soon evening went by and darkness set in. Still there was no sign of the dewan. After some time he was sent for. "I told the zamindar about you," said the dewan. "It appears his father was a lover of poetry. Just because you arrived on his father's anniversary, he has decided to take you into his fold. He has asked me to give you one thousand coins, a golden shawl, and a horse-drawn carriage. Every evening you should come here and recite poems. Here's the money and shawl. The carriage is ready and waiting for





you outside."

Manohar could not believe his ears. He stood still for some time. Then he expressed his gratitude to the zamindar and left the place. The next day he went to the zamindar's house but he was not available. This was repeated on all the days. At the end of one month, he was given one thousand coins. This continued for two years. Manohar thus remained a poet only for namesake. He got no occasion to recite his poems to the zamindar or at gatherings of poets, for, he was expected to visit the zamindar every evening. He would wait for him for some time and then return home. What

if? His salary came regularly at the end of every month.

One day, the carriage did not come for him in the evening. So Manohar decided to foot the distance. On his way he found a pond where he drank water and rested beneath a tree. He came upon a wayfarer resting like him not far away from where he was himself sitting. He saw a well bred horse tied to a tree nearby. The wayfarer smiled; Manohar too smiled at him, and went up to him. The man asked him, "Who are you?"

What a beautiful question? thought Manohar, recalling his encounter with a strange man some years ago. But unlike then when he was almost curt with him, Manohar replied: "I'm a fortunate man; not one who's frustrated!"

"What a strange answer!" remarked the stranger.

"Oh! I'm so sorry!" said Manohar, apologetically. "I was thinking of something else. Could I recite a poem of mine to make amends?" He then recited a poem which had several double-meanings. The theme ran like this: It's full moon. In the moonlight flowers spread scent, which attracts honeybees. They collect honey to their heart's content. Among the flowers and bushes sit a beautiful woman

who has a sad face. The flowers ask her: "We flowers blossom in the morning and fade and fall away in the evening. Still we're happy. You've a face which will never fade away; why then put on a sad face?" The woman replies: "Yes, I too am a flower. But I don't have honeybees hovering around me. Whenever there is breeze, I sway only to be pricked by thorns."

Manohar explained: "My poetry is like the beautiful woman in the garden but with a sad face. I'm unfortunate in the sense that she has found a place only in my poetry. Though I must say, my poetry gives me enough to take care of my family." He did not remain there to listen to the stranger's comments about his poem. He hurried away to the zamindar's place where, like on all other days, he could not meet the zamindar.

A week later, a horse-drawn chariot came and halted in front of Manohar's residence. A soldier went up and saluted Manohar. "The king has sent me to fetch you and take you to the palace with all courtesies."

Manohar guessed that the stranger he met a week earlier must have been the king himself. He was ushered into his presence. "I invite you to join my court and recite poems for my pleasure every evening."



"Your majesty, I shall do your bidding," said Manohar. "But I'm now in the employ of zamindar Narasimhamurthy and receive a salary from him. I must tell him and take his permission before I join the royal court."

"Ah! What loyalty! What honesty!" said the king. "That's a touchstone of your character. Do as you wish."

The vampire concluded the narration there and turned to King Vikramaditya. "Manohar received the highest praise from the king, who promised him peace and prosperity. In the employ of the zamindar, he was agitated: he could not meet the



zamindar even for a day or recite his poems to him. He underwent mental agony, like the rose on a thorny bush. However, instead of falling for the king's promises, he went back to the zamindar to take his permission. That shows his will power and morality. Was the king correct in praising him? He could have easily discarded him. And was Manohar right in going back to the zamindar when he could have easily joined the royal court then and there itself? If you know the answers and still refuse to satisfy me, you know what'll happen to you? Your head will be blown to pieces!"

Vikram as usual had his answers ready: "Man gives more importance to food than his talents. It was Narasimhamurthy who ensured two square meals a day for Manohar and his family. He did not have an ear for poetry, unlike his father. That's why he didn't care to meet Manohar even

for a single day and listen to his poems. This pained him much and he made a poem of his agony and recited it for the benefit of the wayfarer. But he never referred to himself or the zamindar in his poem. The king, who was the wayfarer, realised Manohar's decency and large-heartedness and greatly respected it in his words of praise. The king would have relished flattering words in Manohar's poetry, but he liked Manohar's modesty, and he himself showed his lion-heartedness by allowing Manohar to go back to the zamindar to seek his formal permission to leave his employ. Both Manohar and the king seemed to have understood each other well."

The vampire knew that the king had outsmarted him once again. He flew back to the ancient tree, carrying the corpse along with him. Vikramaditya drew his sword and went after the vampire.



SPORTS

**YESTERDAY
TODAY
TOMORROW**

Wickets: A record

This would not have happened earlier or later. On July 12, 1950, it was the last day of the match between Lancashire Cricket Club and Sussex, when the batsmen on both sides scored 391 runs. The number of wickets which fell on that single day was 30! Lancashire won by 87 runs.

A record salary

The next Olympic Games will take place next year in Atlanta, U.S.A. The Chief of the Olympic Committee is Mr. Bill Payne. He will receive a salary of 631,238 dollars year. In Indian currency this works out to nearly Rs. 2,02,00,000—the highest salary for anyone working in a non-profit organisation in the U.S.A. His next in command—Mr. A.D. Frazier—will draw an annual salary of Rs. 1,43,00,000.

Fattest purse for Indian

Right now India's Viswanathan Anand is playing against Garry Kasparov for the world chess title on the 107th floor of the World Trade Centre in New York. The PCA World Chess Championship Prize money is, in Indian currency,

Rs.4,80,00,000. Of this, the champion will get Rs. 3,20,00,000 and the loser the balance of Rs. 1,60,00,000. By the time, this issue goes to press, eight out of 20 games have been played, and all eight have ended in a draw. If the championship ends in a 10-10 draw, Kasparov, the present holder, will be declared winner and will retain his title. Anand, as the losing challenger, will still receive the fattest ever purse earned by an Indian sportsman.

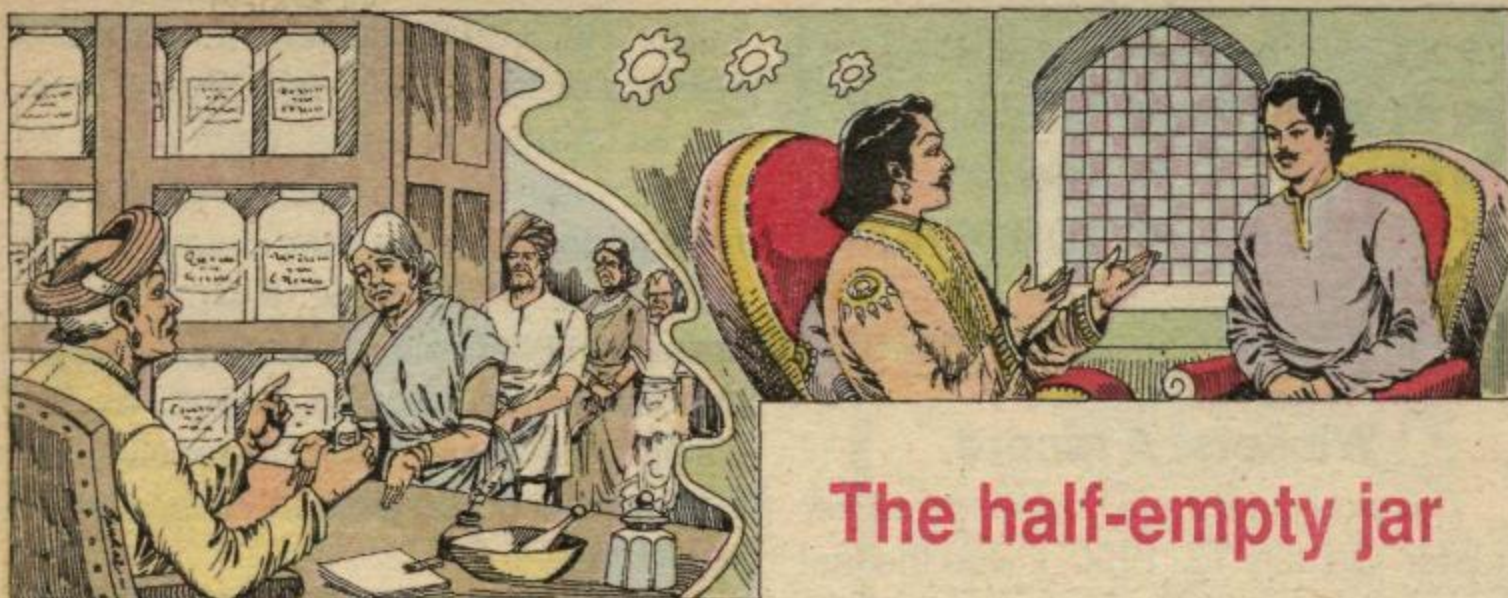
A legend retires

Lester Piggott, who won the Epsom Derby — the most prestigious horse-racing event—a record nine times, has retired at the age of 59. He was the world's champion jockey for 11 times. He rode his first winner in August 1948, when he was just 12 years old. In 1985, he announced retirement and became a trainer, but in 1989, he returned to the saddle. He rode more than 4,500 winners in nearly 45 years. He is considered one of the greatest ever in horse-racing history.

A Bannister forecast

It was Roger Bannister, then a medical student, who broke the 4-minute barrier for the mile-run in 1954. His timing was 3:59.4 minutes. The current mile record (3:44.39) is held by Nouredine Morceli, of Algeria, set in 1993. According to Dr. Bannister, this may be bettered to 3 min. 30 seconds by the turn of the century, helped by synthetic tracks, better shoes, and increased expenditure on training.





The half-empty jar

Ramayya, the zamindar of Rajpur, was a kind-hearted man who went to the help of anyone who approached him for such help. He built hospitals, which drew people from every nook and corner. Among the doctors in these hospitals was Neelkantayya, who was in charge of all of them as he was the seniormost. He died suddenly, and Ramayya was thinking of appointing an equally clever and capable successor to him.

He happened to discuss this with his close friend, Chandrayya. "Neelkantayya had four assistants under him. I think you should select one of them. Of course, you must meet them and give them some kind of test to help you choose one of them," Chandrayya suggested.

Ramayya approved of Chandrayya's suggestion. True. Those who

would have any firsthand knowledge of how Neelkantayya functioned were the four assistants. He sent word to them that they should meet him the next morning.

Accordingly, they went to the zamindar's residence punctually at 9 o'clock. A servant received them and asked them to wait. His master was busy otherwise, but would meet them presently.

One hour passed, and then another full hour. The four doctors were getting impatient. Didn't the zamindar know the value of time? they wondered. One of them doubted whether they were not being put to some kind of test. Another person thought that the zamindar was insulting them. The third searched for the servant. "What's happening? How much more time would he take to

meet us?" The servant could not give him any satisfactory answer.

It was nearing noon when the zamindar came there, accompanied by Chandrayya. He was not a stranger to the doctors. But neither Ramayya nor Chandrayya knew nothing about medicine, and so what kind of test would they set for the doctors? thought all four of them conceitedly.

While Chandrayya remained talking to them, a servant brought a glass jar and placed it on the table there. "I shall ask you three questions and each one of you should give me an answer. Now, Jayant, tell me something about this jar."

Jayant did not like the question. "What nonsense!" he thought, though he did not utter it. "Half the jar has water."

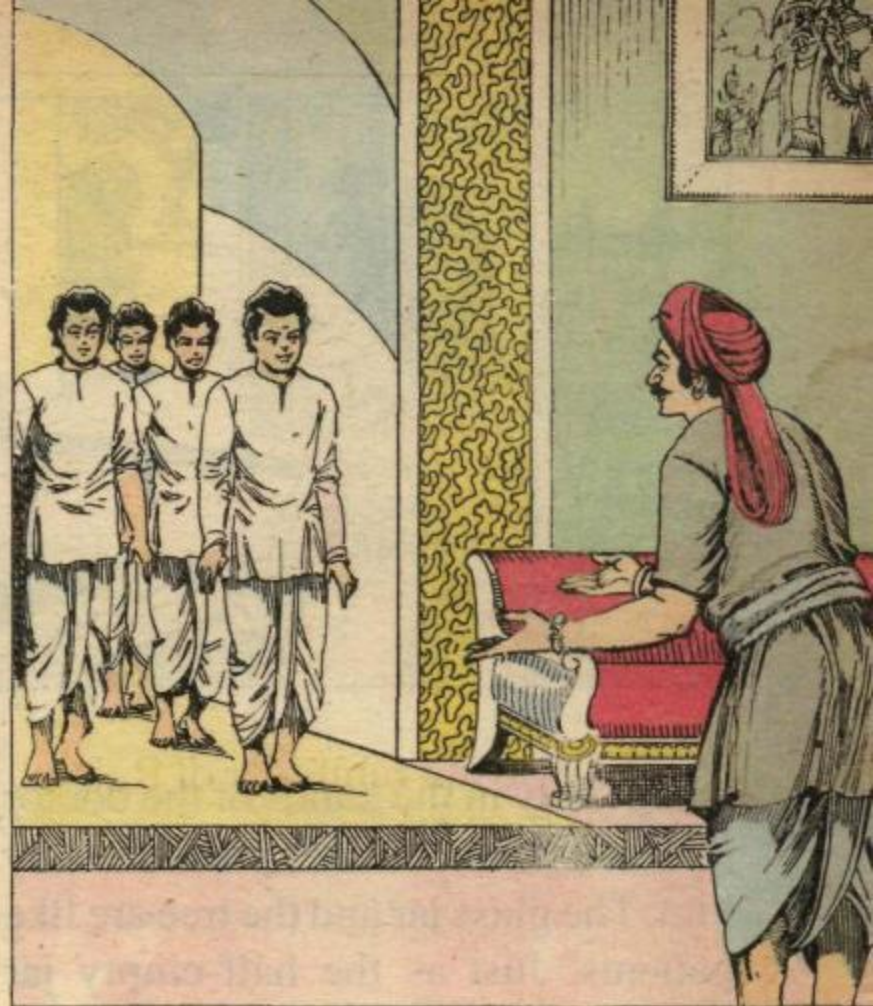
"Can you tell me something about the tree?" asked Chandrayya, pointing to a tree outside.

"It is denuded. The leaves have fallen down," he replied with a wry face.

"All right. Can you tell me why I am asking these questions?" said Chandrayya.

Jayant groped for an answer.

Chandrayya called in Narendra and Mohan, one after the other and put to them the same questions. Their

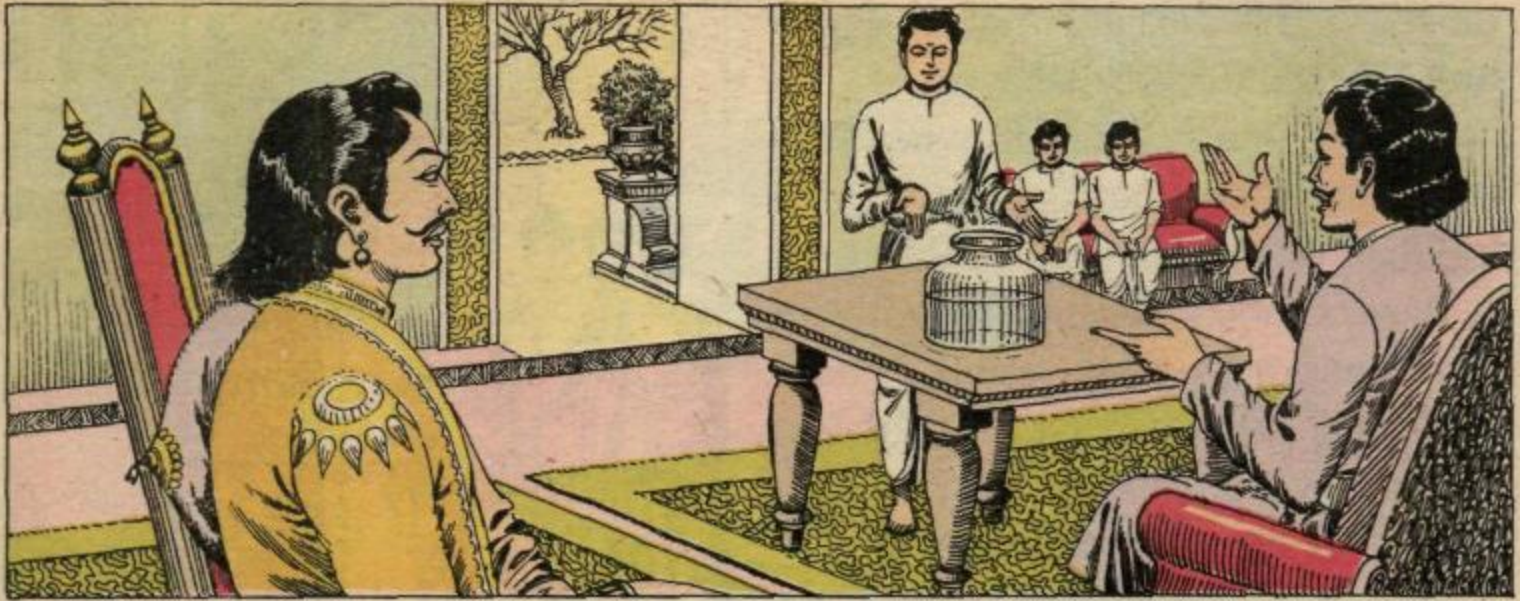


answers were not very different from what Jayant had said.

Mahendra was called in last. "The half-empty jar can be filled with water." This was his answer to the first question. "When spring comes, the tree will be full of leaves," was the answer to the second question.

Chandrayya then posed the third question, asking him to spell out the answer loudly so that the other three persons could also hear him.

"A doctor should study the state of mind of the patient. He should be told of things that would put him at ease, so as to earn his confidence in the doctor. He would then place himself



completely in the hands of the doctor and take the medicines prescribed by him. The glass jar and the tree are like patients. Just as the half-empty jar can be filled with water, and the denuded tree will be full of leaves in spring, a patient can be cured of his illness and brought back to normal life," said Mahendra.

Chandrayya asked him further, "Shouldn't the doctor have patience when he talks to the patient?"

"Of course, he should have," said

Mahendra. "And you and the zamindar really tried our patience this morning when you took time to meet us, though you had asked us to be here at an appointed hour. That was the first test you gave us!" he added smilingly.

Chandrayya turned to Ramayya, who understood his friend's smile. He told Mahendra, "We both are very pleased with you. You're being given the charge of all my hospitals in the place of Neelkantayya."

You can safely walk upon thorns with your shoes on; shod with knowledge, you can safely roam over the thorny world.

Truth is the property of God; the pursuit of truth is what belongs to man.



Haste pays!

Narayana Sastri was always in a hurry. He would never think for a while before doing anything. One day he had to go somewhere to officiate as priest at a wedding. "The auspicious time is early in the morning, so I'll leave home by 4 o'clock," he told his wife, as he went to bed.

He was not aware, but outside there were some thieves lurking, who heard him. They marked their time to gain entry into the house.

Sastri got up early, got ready, and came out, alerting his wife: "Close the door from inside."

After he went away, the woman closed the door and went back to sleep. She did not know that the thieves had managed to get in before she closed the door. They realised she was alone and their job would be easy. She drew the blanket and closed her eyes.

It was pitch dark all around. The

thieves knew they could now come out safely and carry on their activities. Suddenly, there was a knock on the door. It was Narayana Sastri. He called his wife. He had forgotten his shawl. His wife gave him the shawl and he went away. She closed the door again.

The thieves waited. The clouds had by now disappeared, and there was a faint moonlight. But it was enough for the thieves. They noticed a huge jar full of rice, and a big towel hanging by its side. They could use the towel to carry away the rice. They had hardly opened the jar when they heard the knock again. They hid themselves in a dark corner.

This time Sastri had forgotten his hand bag. His wife knew where it was. So, she could fetch it even in darkness. Sastri went away; the woman closed the door and went back to her mattress. She stepped on some-



thing like a piece of cloth. She felt the sides. It was their towel. She folded it and kept it near her mattress and closed her eyes.

Now the thieves were in a hurry. They must bundle up the rice in the towel, and then leave the place before Sastri came again and before it was day break. They did not realise that the towel was nowhere near the jar. They thought the towel had been spread on the floor and began scooping rice from the jar and dropping it on the towel which was really not there! They wanted to tie the four ends together so that they could carry the bundle. They groped for the ends. What happened? Where was the

towel? they wondered.

Now what could they do? Suddenly there was the loud knock again. Sastri? "It's almost dawn? Didn't you go to the wedding place?" asked Sastri's wife, getting up, rubbing her sleepy eyes, and moving to the door.

Dawn already? The thieves managed to scamper out. In their hurry, they forgot their own little bag. It contained money they had picked up elsewhere.

This time Sastri remembered to carry all that he wanted for the ceremony. The haste with which he had left the place first time and twice later had only brought in some unexpected gain!

Happiness is the gift of seeing the good things in life in such high relief that the rest is unimportant.

Man is not the creature of circumstances. Circumstances are the creatures of man.





LET US KNOW

What is the spoils system?

- Rashmi Biswal, Durgapur

Just as thieves distribute among themselves what they have plundered, or victors do with the booty they have taken from their enemies in war, those who secure public offices see that their partymen derive benefits from the position they hold. Distributing benefits among the supporters of the successful political party is called spoils system which is an accepted practice these days. We have the instances of Chief Ministers appointing their partymen as heads of public undertakings or corporations.

What is the scientific name for the banyan tree?

-Kumar Nityanand, Chinchinwad, Pune

To the scientific world, the banyan is '*Ficus benghalensis* Linn.' See *Chandamama* May 1995 issue for more information on the banyan.

Reader N.S. Mani, of Nehrunagar, Chromepet, Madras, says: *tax* is levied on individuals, while *duty* is levied on goods. (see *Chandamama*, September 1995).

FROM OUR READERS

I was once not a regular reader, but of late I have become addicted to *Chandamama*. It has educative value. Please publish stories of Alexander, Julius Caesar, and other great personages.

— Yanenlo Apon, Kohima, Nagaland

Chandamama is a great magazine for entertainment. My father brings it every month for me to learn about so many things. It improves my knowledge. I enjoy Vikram and Vampire, Panchatantra, and Sindbad. I request you to add more of general knowledge.

—Tushar S. Kudchadkar, Goa

Chandamama is really an interesting magazine. It improves our knowledge. I purchase it every month to learn good types of English terms. I expect more from it in the future.

— Pradip Karkakar, Bankura, West Bengal



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Bhanu



Tajy Prasad

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? You may write it on a post card and mail it to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by the 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs. 100/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

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The winning entry : "OUR CULTURE", "OUR PRIDE"

PICKS FROM THE WISE

Beauty is often worse than wine, intoxicating both the holder and the beholder.

- Zimmerman

Economics is a subject that does not greatly respect one's wishes.

- Khrushchev

The absurd man is he who never changes.

- Barthelemy

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